

Turkish deputies to debate wealth of former premier

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish parliament is to vote this week on setting up another corruption inquiry against beleaguered coalition partner Tansu Ciller, Anatolian news agency said on Tuesday.

Deputies will decide on Wednesday whether to probe the source of former Prime Minister Ciller's substantial personal wealth, the agency said.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's Motherland Party has helped pass two Islamist-inspired corruption investigations against Ms. Ciller in recent months, bringing the shaky conservative coalition close to collapse.

Ciller's True Path Party hit back on Monday by voting with the Islamist Welfare Party to debate a censure motion against Mr. Yilmaz.

U.S.-educated Ms. Ciller, a dollar multimillionaire, became Muslim but secular Turkey's first woman leader in 1993. She has been dogged by allegations of corruption, dating to her term in office, since she stepped down in March under the coalition deal.

The Islamists, who form the biggest group in parliament, have benefited from months of bitter arguments between the government allies.

Welfare leader Necmettin Erbakan, buoyed by a strong showing at local elections at the weekend, repeated a call after Monday's vote for Mr. Yilmaz to step down.

"The prime minister really must resign after this result," Mr. Erbakan was quoted as saying by the Anatolian. Erbakan's party, which came first in general elections in December, dominated local polls in

41 constituencies on Sunday, winning 33.5 per cent of the vote, according to unofficial final results.

Corruption allegations and infighting between the coalition partners meanwhile appeared to have hurt support for their parties.

Mr. Yilmaz's Motherland Party (ANAP) came second in the local polls with 20.9 per cent of the vote and Ms. Ciller's DYP was third with 12 per cent.

The censure motion decision increased pressure on Mr. Yilmaz, already facing calls for his resignation, to act as if he wants to hector Monday's vote he told deputies from ANAP that new elections were the only alternative to the current alliance.

"Within the parliament there is no better alternative to this government. The only alternative to this is an early election," Mr. Yilmaz said.

His personal rival is among those calling for his resignation, suggesting the formation of a majority left-right coalition in place of their loveless alliance.

Opposition parties on Monday were united in expressing their exasperation with the right-wing alliance of Mr. Yilmaz and the corruption allegations which have undermined it.

"We will support the motion to prevent the mutual allegations from sully politics any more," said Onder Sav from the Republican People's Party (CHP).

Mumtaz Soysal from the leftist Democratic Left Party (DSP) said the DSP would boycott Saturday's vote to approve the motion, in protest at the continuing parliamentary squabbling.



FLASHPOINT: An Israeli soldier separates a young Jewish woman settler (left) and a Palestinian youth Tuesday after she accused the youth of pushing her as she walked to her home in the Jewish settlement in the centre of Hebron, the last major Palestinian town still under the control of the Israeli army in the West Bank (Reuter photo)

Islamic right firmly in power in Tehran amid mounting hardship

By Laurent Maillard
Agence France Presse

TEHRAN — Right-wing religious conservatives firmly hold the reins of power in Iran after taking control of the Iranian parliament, as the Islamic regime faces mounting economic, social and external woes.

A key figure in the Islamic leadership, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, was re-elected as speaker of the new parliament on Sunday after his fellow conservatives roundly defeated their moderate rivals in legislative polls in March and April.

Assured of a majority of seats in the assembly, the conservatives are now eyeing the presidency, the last moderate bastion which is up for grabs in next year's presidential polls.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri is already being groomed for the post, as President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a moderate, has served two four-year terms and is therefore barred under the constitution from seeking reelection.

Grouped behind the paramount leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the conservatives who have tight links to the powerful Iranian hazaar, control all major political establishments in the country except the presidency.

The Council of Experts, which picks the leader, the Council of the Guardians, which oversees legislation, and the Council of Discretion, which arbitrates in disputes between the latter two, are all dominated by the conservative Shiite Muslim clergy.

On the security front, they control the elite Revolutionary guards and the volunteer Islamic militia, or the Basij, both of which take orders directly from Ayatollah Khamenei.

They also command key ministries in Mr. Rafsanjani's administration, notably the interior, Islamic culture, foreign affairs, commerce, as well as such propaganda apparatus as the state radio and television organisation and the Islamic Propagation Organisation.

The right also has under

its wing almost all of the foundations dominating financial affairs in Iran.

"It was the conservatives who paved the way for the revolution and toppled the Shah," said a political analyst in Iran.

"Crippled by a wave of bombings, they lost their power in 1981 to Islamic left-wingers, who were favoured by then leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini," he said.

"In 1992, they regained control of the parliament with the help of moderates. Now the moderates are marginalised and the conservatives are practically the only ones in power," the same analyst said.

The conservatives' triumphant return to power comes as the Islamic republic faces mounting difficulties.

The middle and lower classes, which have been a support base for the revolution, are suffering unprecedented economic hardship struggling to combat soaring inflation and unemployment.

The economic woes have

provoked a social crisis, especially among the country's sizeable young population who are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the ideals of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

On the political front, the country faces growing threats from the United States, which accuses Iran of supporting terrorism and seeking to acquire nuclear weapons and has waged a fierce campaign to isolate it.

Aware of such threats, the religious right has resolved to return to the revolution's moral and ideological values by rallying behind Ayatollah Khamenei, who has managed to rise to dizzying heights in the past few years.

They also seek to turn away from Western-style development and address economic problems based on the principle of "social justice."

But the religious right has "historically been capable of great pragmatism," an Iranian political observer said.

New riches emerge from the ruins of Iraq embargo

By Acil Tabbara
Agence France Presse

BAGHDAD — It never dawned on Nasra Saadun that she would be needy one day, and yet this Iraqi economist and her husband found their wages were only just enough to buy bread some days last winter.

"When the dollar bit 3,000 dinars in December, I opened my house to the new rich and told them: 'everything is for sale, take what you want,'" Nasra recounted from her home in the upmarket Mansour neighbourhood of Baghdad.

Money has changed hands in the six years of U.N. economic sanctions: a growing number of well-to-

do families are finding themselves penniless while a class of nouveaux riches has appeared.

"We used to lunch at a swank club in Baghdad. We travelled, we bought new clothes," said Nasra, a woman in her 40s.

With her husband, a retired top-level civil servant who writes economic articles, they earn 20,000 dinars per month. "Several months ago we needed 1,500 dinars to buy bread every day," the mother of two said.

Nasra said the situation has improved with the recovery of the dinar, which now trades at around 800 to the dollar, and her family can now buy some meat or vegetables.

But the golden days are over: Nasra has sold her most precious rug and her mother's silver.

Rent from the three old apartments she owns in the centre of town only bring in a token sum, and with regard to her family's land in southern Iraq, "we have begged the peasants who till them to buy them, but in vain," she said.

Many of her neighbours face the same fate.

But at the same time new luxurious homes with marble are sprouting up in her neighbourhood, the latest Mercedes are parked in elegant neighbourhoods, and restaurants where a meal cost three times the average salary are full.

Some customers climb on

to the stage to offer the singer a big wad of bills.

Luxury hotels propose vacations for children of 15,000 dinars per month, to get them to use the pool and join daily crafts workshops.

Most of the nouveaux riches — a fraction of the population — are dealers in food products, importers of spare parts for cars, or moneychangers who profit from the sharp depreciation of the Iraqi currency.

But government employees who form the majority of the working-age population earn an average of 3,000 dinars per month.

Sanaa Ahmad works 16 hours a day: her job as nurse earns her 3,000 dinars, and she spends the

evening washing laundry in the hospitals for 2,000 dinars. Her husband, a retired soldier, repairs cars for 200 dinars per day.

"We make only one meal per day and I send the children to school without breakfast," the mother of six children said. Her youngest child, who is six years old, has dark hollows under her eyes.

Sanaa has sold everything: refrigerator, washing machine, oven, tables, chairs. In the main room only a sofa remains with a television set and pots in a corner.

"Women from well-to-do families come and beg me to find them work," according to Ruqia Ibrahim, an official at the

local chapter of the Union of Iraqi Women.

She recalled how the wife of an engineer had to sell cigarettes in the street for lack of money.

"I get them hired as housemaids in families who assure me of their discretion. They don't want their neighbours to know," Ruqia said.

Ruqia, a retired civil servant, provides beauty care at home to help her make ends meet. But who in Baghdad today can afford the luxury of receiving skin care?

"Ob, the new rich," she said wearily.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vanunu says agents killed his temptress

TEL AVIV (R) — Jailed nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu has said a young woman who helped in his 1986 Israeli-ordered abduction was murdered by the secret agents who seized him, court records made public on Monday revealed. Foreign news reports have said a blonde Israeli agent known only as Cindy lured Mr. Vanunu from London to Rome, where other agents kidnapped him and spirited him to the Jewish state to stand trial for passing nuclear secrets to a British newspaper. In an appeal petition submitted several months ago to the supreme court, Mr. Vanunu asked for an investigation into both the circumstances of his September 1986 abduction, and the fate of the woman agent, Israel's Itim domestic news agency said. "Vanunu put forth his view that the young woman, who according to his kidnappers," it said. The supreme court denied Vanunu's petition. Mr. Vanunu has been in solitary confinement since his conviction at a secret 1986 trial for espionage and treason. He was sentenced to 18 years in jail for giving the London Sunday Times smuggled photos of Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor. Israel has refrained from confirming or denying foreign reports it has built at least 200 nuclear weapons in Dimona.

Kuwait said to buy British missiles

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A British firm beat a French competitor for a contract worth up to \$200 million to equip Kuwait's naval patrol boats with missiles, the newspaper Al-Sayassah reported on Tuesday. Defence minister Sheikh Ahmad Hammoud Al-Jaber Al-Sabah told the daily that a British firm would deliver the missiles next year, but the British and French embassies said they had not been officially notified of a contract award. British Aerospace is competing with its Sea Skua missiles, while France's Aerospatiale is bidding with MM-15 missiles for the supply contract. Kuwait ordered eight fast patrol boats from France in 1993, worth \$480 million. Since then, the French and British manufacturers have been competing hard to win the missile order. Britain and France were both members of the U.S.-led coalition which forced Iraqi troops to end their seven-month occupation of Kuwait in February 1991. The United States is Kuwait's main supplier in a \$12-billion rearmament drive which Kuwait began after liberation. But France and Britain have both been pushing hard to maximise their share of the contract awards.

Germans help 'toxic plant in Syria'

BONN (AFP) — Syria is building a toxic gas factory in Aleppo similar to one in Tarhounah in Libya, probably with the help of German industrialists, the German weekly Stern reported Tuesday, citing western intelligence services. Stern said U.S. intelligence services had sent their German colleagues satellite photographs of the facility, while German investigators were examining the possible involvement of industrialist Hans-Joachim Rose. Mr. Rose, 47, who has been in prison since July 1995, is being tried in Stuttgart from Tuesday accused of delivering to Libya in 1994 a plant destined for the manufacture of poison gas. In March 1995, Mr. Rose was sentenced to 21 months suspended for attempting the illegal export of material destined for the arms industry in Libya and Iran.

Indonesia hopes peace process will proceed

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas on Tuesday expressed hope that the Middle East peace process would continue unhindered after the election of Israel's new premier, a hardline conservative. "We hope that with the election of the new prime minister (of Israel), the peace process will continue to roll on and not suffer from change," Mr. Alatas told journalists after meeting Indonesian President Suharto. Alatas declined further comment on Benjamin Netanyahu's election victory last week. "There is no special comment because as usual, we do not comment on something which we deem the internal affairs" of another country, Mr. Alatas said. Indonesia, a prominent supporter of the Palestinian cause, has no diplomatic ties with Israel.

Arafat to visit Beijing this month

BEIJING (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat will make a three-day official visit to China in the second half of June, diplomats said Tuesday. The date for the trip, which will probably focus on the Middle East peace process, has yet to be officially set, but reliable sources said Mr. Arafat would arrive on June 19. Arafat's last trip to China, a long-standing ally of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), was in September 1993. China forged diplomatic ties with Israel in January 1992. On Tuesday it sent a message of congratulations to Israeli premier-elect Benjamin Netanyahu, adding that it hoped "the next government under his leadership will make positive efforts to further advance the Middle East peace process," a government spokesman said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 The Flintstones
15:30 Iri
15:45 Bill Nye the Science Guy
16:10 Kelly
17:00 News Flash
17:02 Children's Programme — Les Policiers
17:30 Serie — Secret De Famille
19:15 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Evening Shade
20:00 World net
20:25 Drama — Chancer EP.1
21:10 Hunter
22:00 News in English
22:25 The Bold and the Beautiful
23:10 Arrow

PRAYER TIMES

03:51 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Doha
12:34 Dhuhr
16:14 Asr
19:42 Maghrib
21:16 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilheh, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel.
632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624901
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

TERRACOTA CHURCH

Tel. 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

633541
Anglican Church Tel. 652426
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
773331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.
775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel.
652556
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.
824326
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman
Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to rise slightly but remaining below average with winds northwesterly light to moderate. In Aqaba winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 14/28
Aqaba 21/35
Dera'a 13/30
Jordan Valley 18/35
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 24 Aqaba 32 Humidity
readings: Amman 34 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bassam Karadshah 759291
Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi 847788
Dr. Salmaan Al Daboudi 776751
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846771
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asana pharmacy 637855
Naimukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 634731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimeani pharmacy 637661
Nairouh pharmacy 623672
Najih pharmacy 647632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Blood Bank 617101
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630721
Hotel Complaints 805880
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680101
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 634381
RJ Flight Information 08-53361
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53361

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Civil Defence Emergency

199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 617101
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630721
Hotel Complaints 805880
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680101
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 634381
RJ Flight Information 08-53361
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53361

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

08:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 Larnaca (RJ)
10:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:10 Istanbul (RJ)
18:30 Paris (RJ)
19:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:10 Brussels, Vienna (RJ)
19:15 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
20:15 London, Berlin (RJ)
20:15 Rome (RJ)
01:30 Cairo (RJ)
04:25 Beirut (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:00 Amsterdam (KL)
06:45 Beirut (ME)
12:00 Sanaa (Y)
12:15 Jeddah (SV)
13:00 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
13:15 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:20 Dubai (TU)
16:20 Algiers (AH)
19:00 Dubai (EK)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53361

5. where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

08:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 Larnaca (RJ)
10:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:10 Istanbul (RJ)
18:30 Paris (RJ)
19:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:10 Brussels, Vienna (RJ)
19:15 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
20:15 London, Berlin (RJ)
20:15 Rome (RJ)
01:30 Cairo (RJ)
04:25 Beirut (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:00 Amsterdam (KL)
06:45 Beirut (ME)
12:00 Sanaa (Y)
12:15 Jeddah (SV)
13:00 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
13:15 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:20 Dubai (TU)
16:20 Algiers (AH)
19:00 Dubai (EK)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights

(Marka Airport)

20:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)

ROYAL WINGS (RW) Flights

(Marka Airport)

19:45 Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

11:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:40 Berlin, London (RJ)
12:00 Rome (RJ)
12:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:45 Istanbul (RJ)
14:15 Colombo (RJ)
21:00 Beirut (RJ)
21:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
22:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
23:45 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:00 Amsterdam (KL)
06:45 Beirut (ME)
12:00 Sanaa (Y)
12:15 Jeddah (SV)
13:00 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
13:15 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:20 Dubai (TU)
16:20 Algiers (AH)
19:00 Dubai (EK)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

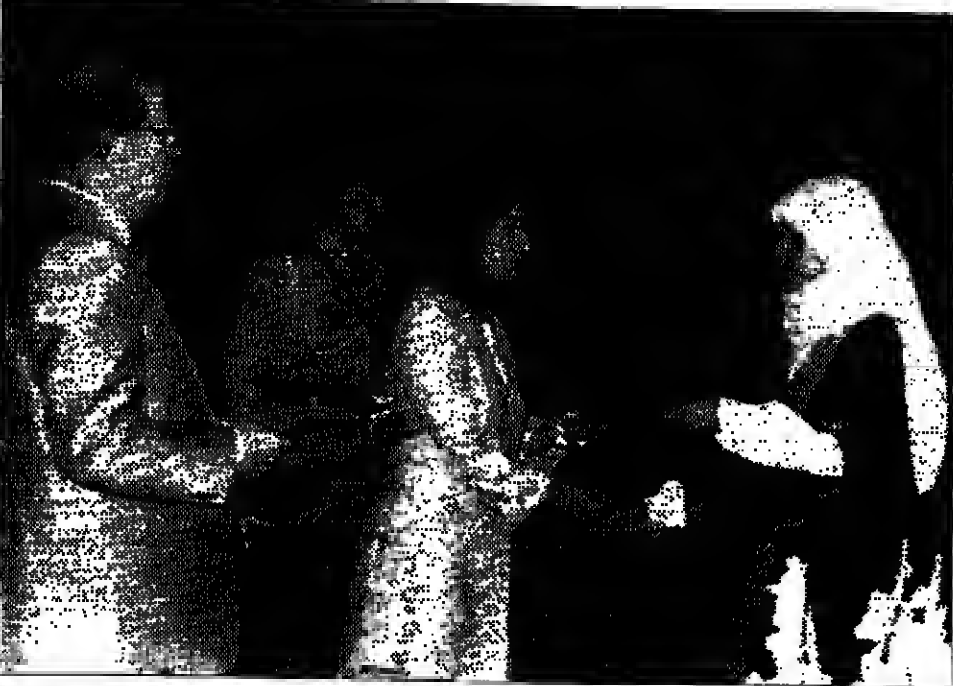
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apricot 950/600
Apple 700/500
Banana 600/400
Banana (Mukammal) 520/320
Banana (imported) 700/550
Cabbage 80/50
Carrot 180/120
Cauliflower 220/140
Cucumber (large) 120/80
Cucumber (small) 190/120
Eggplant 280/180
Garlic 550/400
Garlic (green) 270/150
Lemon 650/450
Marrow (large) 170/120
Marrow (small) 250/170
Mulkhiyah 180/100
Onion (dry) 110/70
Orange 400/300
Peach 600/450
Pepper (hot) 320/220
Pepper (sweet) 450/300
Potato 200/170
String Bean 380/240
Tomato 180/120
Water melon 130/80



Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Tuesday distributes diplomas to graduates from the Princess Sarvath College. The 207 graduates were addressed by College Dean Radi Waqfi and Sirsa Hikmat of the college's board of trustees. The ceremony was attended by Minister of Education Munther Masri and senior officials (Petra photo)

Prince Raad stresses value of police professionalism

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid Tuesday said the unique state of security Jordan enjoys plays a key role in promoting the Kingdom's tourism industry, especially at the present stage when it is witnessing an influx of tourists after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

At a meeting with Public Security Department (PSD) Director Major-General Nasouh Muheiddin, Prince Raad emphasised the importance of focusing on the issue of "tourist security" and dealing with tourists in a hospitable and professional manner.

This, he continued, requires selecting educated and well-trained PSD personnel to deal with tourist groups.

Prince Raad also dealt with the increase in the number of car accidents in the Kingdom and urged the PSD to study the issue and work on curbing these incidents.

He said the need arises to especially tackle the vehicle-pedestrian accidents and called for building pedestrian bridges and tunnels, launching awareness campaigns among motorists and educating school and college students on traffic rules.

Maj. Gen. Moheiddin said the department gives due concern to tourism, describing the establishment of the tourist police section at the department as a first step towards serving the concept of "tourist security" and preserving Jordan's image as a secure and stable country.

He said the PSD started to apply a new philosophy that goes beyond fighting crime and focuses on studying its causes and providing

police officers with the proper training to implement this philosophy.

He also said that the department embarked on programmes to upgrade the performance of criminal investigators and to restructure the Amman Police Department.

The PSD, he added, will create a post for assistant director for criminal investigation in the Amman Police Department and will provide the department with all needed equipment and machinery to enable its personnel to carry out their duties in the best manner.

Maj. Gen. Moheiddin noted that the PSD has succeeded in building bridges of confidence between citizens and policemen and is working to maintain this confidence.

Conferees call for trilateral effort to provide youth with valuable means, opportunities

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN - Representatives from the 15 member-countries of the European Union (EU), Iceland and Norway, as well as 13 Arab countries, Malta, Cyprus and Israel called on non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments and the EU to provide the youth of European and Mediterranean countries with means and opportunities to promote exchanges and mutual understanding.

Stressing the role that youth play in shaping the cultural, political, and socio-economic identity of society, the final recommendations of an international conference on the role of youth exchanges between the EU and the Mediterranean third countries, which closed here yesterday, said that "it is imperative that the youth take up the activities and initiatives themselves, and it is imperative for NGOs, governments and the EU to provide the means and the opportunities for them to do so."

The participants in the conference also stressed the

importance of creating a "coherent operational framework for youth exchanges and youth workers in the Mediterranean countries" and pointed to the need for youth programmes to be decentralised, "in order to be as close as possible to the local level within countries and between countries."

Chairing the closing session, HRH Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan, stressed the importance of promoting research targeted at opening up the potential of youth as well as promoting exchange of information about youth among Mediterranean countries.

Opening the conference on behalf of HRH Crown Prince Hassan on Saturday, Princess Rahma had pointed to the social problems and pressures common to young people regardless of their nationalities, and said "such similarities make imperative that barriers between peoples of the (Mediterranean) region are dissolved so that youth can benefit from each other's experiences and nurture the feelings of empathy that are needed to ensure a peaceful

coexistence."

The conference, organised by the Rome-based Università del Mediterraneo, with the support of the Directorate General for Education, Training and Youth (DG XXII) of the European Commission and the sponsorship of the Italian Ministry of Social Affairs, in collaboration with the University of Jordan, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Youth, aimed at providing an opportunity to exchange information on structures, policies and youth activities on both the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, as well as evaluate the needs, interests and priorities, within the framework of youth exchanges as enlightened in the Barcelona Declaration.

The final document of last November's Barcelona Conference aimed at promoting and materialising Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and "specifically called for the increase of the exchanges among youths of Mediterranean countries." Head of DG XXII at the European Commission Alexandros Tsolakis told the Jordan Times.



Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan

He said "the programme is based on the principle that projects must be proposed and promoted by the youth themselves," and added that "youth exchanges are an educational and pedagogical tool for achieving understanding."

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Nephew kills aunt with 14 gunshots

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 39-year-old woman was shot and killed Monday by her nephew in Madaba Camp for alleged adultery, according to official sources.

Najah Odeh was shot 14 times in the head and chest by her 31-year-old nephew, identified only as M.D., who surrendered to police shortly after the crime was committed.

According to the source, M.D. decided to kill his aunt because she frequently left the house and was seeing many people without the knowledge of her family.

A Madaba police official contacted by the Jordan Times Tuesday confirmed that a woman was killed but declined to give any further details.

Najah is the sixth victim reportedly killed in a "crime of honour" since the beginning of the year.

Also Tuesday, police in

Sahab were investigating the death of a 19-year-old man who was found strangled in his tent, PSD reports said.

A police official told the Jordan Times that the authorities suspect that the victim, identified as Awad Soud "committed suicide."

"Until now we are still investigating the case, but preliminary investigations point to a suicide," the official said.

Meanwhile, a 45-year-old man was shot and killed accidentally by his friend in Jabal Qasour in Amman, PSD reports said.

According to the report, Mahmoud Khalaf was with his friends when one of them, identified as Hussam Mandouh, drew a gun and started playing with it.

"A bullet was fired and it struck Mr. Khalaf in the chest killing him instantly," the report said.

Mr. Khalaf is the third victim of fatal weapons mishaps in the Kingdom since the beginning of June.

Minister reviews municipal council need in Jordan Valley

SOUTH SHUNEH (Petra)

— Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq TUBEISHAT Tuesday stressed the need to merge small municipal councils into larger ones which will be able to offer the required services to citizens.

At a meeting with heads of rural and municipal councils in the northern Jordan Valley district, Dr. Tubeishat said the conditions of municipal councils in most parts of the Kingdom require a review because of the increasing debts they are incurring.

The ministry, he

announced, prepared a plan to monitor the work of municipalities and help them carry out their duties in the best manner.

The minister said the Cabinet has recently decided to set up a technical committee to tackle the problem of flies in the Jordan Valley area and added that his ministry has allocated JD 200,000 to purchase pesticides to fight flies and rodents in various parts of the Kingdom.

Replying to the heads of municipal councils present at the meeting, Dr. Tubeishat said the ministry cannot open main roads in

the district because this is the work of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing and because of the large amounts of money such projects require.

Wadi Al Rayyan Mayor As'ad Khatib briefed the minister on the district's demands and needs and called for aiding municipal councils in the district in establishing a slaughterhouse and carrying out a sewerage network project.

After the meeting, the minister visited the tourist village in North Shuneh town and toured its various facilities.

Doctors remove brain tumour using high-tech gamma ray knife

AMMAN (PETRA) — A medical team from Ibn Al Hailtham Hospital, headed by Ahmad Halileh Tuesday removed a brain tumour using a gamma knife, a gamma ray emitting tool considered a breakthrough in modern surgical procedures.

The medical team, who performed the operation on a female patient, used the gamma knife to destroy the tumour without resorting to traditional brain surgery utilising standard surgical equipment.

The operation is the first of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa region, using state-of-art equipment.

Dr. Halileh, head of the radiology department at the hospital, said the equipment has proved successful in treating benign and malignant tumours, blood clots and congenital malformation.

He said the new equipment has proved successful in 98 per cent of cases of blood clots, while the success rate in removing benign tumours

is 90 per cent.

Dr. Halileh stressed that the patient does not have to stay more than one day in hospital, adding that he or she can report to work on the following day.

He explained that the first step in treatment is to identify the location of the tumour or the blood clot and to determine the volume of rays needed for treatment.

That done, the patient is brought to the operation theatre where he or she undergoes the radiology treatment.

The equipment includes 201 central sources for sending rays: the rays can be directed at the tumour area without affecting other parts of the body, according to the specialists involved in this treatment. The surgeon can destroy the tumour area without affecting the right brain cells adjacent to it.

The rays emanating from the equipment kill benign tumours, and bring malignant tumours under control by stopping their growth in one

or perhaps two sessions, Dr. Halileh said.

Dr. Issam Hawamdeh, member of Ibn Al Hailtham Board of Directors, said the computer used in the surgery was the latest version produced, noting that Jordan was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa region and the 15th country worldwide to acquire this highly advanced system.

He pointed out that 70 such gamma knives are being utilised in the 15 countries which have so far purchased the innovative equipment.

On the costs of treatment using this equipment, Dr. Hawamdeh said the maximum is JD 7,000, which is only 50 or 60 per cent of the costs of similar operations abroad. He said the price of the gamma knife equipment is JD 5 million.

Worldwide, more than 40,000 patients have been treated by this method, Dr. Hawamdeh said.

Officials address water problems in Maan

MAAN (Petra) — An individual's daily share of water in Maan Governorate equals 275 litres which is more than the average for all other parts of the Kingdom, Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Munther Khalafat Tuesday said.

During a visit to the governorate and a meeting with senior governorate officials to discuss water shortages in Maan, Mr. Khalafat said the governorate gets its water from local sources and urged the officials present at the meeting to start to spread public awareness of the water shortage crisis and ways to ration water consumption.

Mr. Khalafat said the ministry is currently conducting several water projects and planning others in a bid to tackle the governorate's chronic water shortage problem.

He said the ministry in February started work on a project to dig two wells in Qan' Maan which will serve Maan City and hotels in the Wadi Musa district.

Once the JD 1.75 million project is finished in

the beginning of next year, he said, each of the two wells will enable the ministry to pump 150 cubic metres of water per an hour to consumers.

According to Mr. Khalafat, the ministry will dig 10 more wells in the governorate over the coming two decades with a combined capacity to pump 13,790 cubic metres of water a day to consumers instead of the present 6,700 cubic metres.

The ministry will also build a 4,500-cubic-metre reservoir in Ail and a 3,000-cubic-metre reservoir in Wadi Musa to collect rainwater, he added.

Earlier at the meeting, the Maan officials complained of the water shortage in the governorate, especially in Al Shobak district.

They called on the ministry to demonstrate concern to the governorate and to increase its water share, especially that rainfall last winter was much below the annual average, which will negatively reflect on the agricultural season.

Public nurses dismayed at government pledges, plan to strike today

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Government nurses around the Kingdom are determined to stage a two-hour strike today demanding pay raises, despite promises made by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Tuesday that the government is committed to looking into their demands, said the head of the Jordanian Nursing Association (JNA).

"We appreciate the efforts Mr. Kabariti is initiating to solve our problems and meet our demands, but we want a true and written commitment," said JNA President Hashem Salameh.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Kabariti met with a JNA delegation and assured them that his government is serious about their requests.

"He (the Prime Minister) promised to restructure the health sector to reconsider the regulations related to incentives and promotions for nurses, but this is not enough for us and we need a written commitment from the government," Mr. Salameh said.

Mr. Salameh told the Jordan Times that a JNA committee met following its talks with the government and decided to proceed with their planned strike.

On Sunday, JNA committee members met with Minister of Health Aref Batayneh who expressed concerns about their demands and promised to exert all efforts to solve the problem. But such pledges, according to Mr. Salameh, "were not convincing enough for us to halt our strike."

According to Mr. Salameh, around 2,200 government nurses in health institutes around the Kingdom will stop work between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Wednesday except in emergency cases.

The nurses, who will increase their strike exponentially,

demanding a 90 per cent raise, instead of the present 50 per cent raise, and inclusion in an incentive allowance system.

The strike will resume on Sunday and nurses will not offer any medical services for four hours. If the government does not respond to their demands, nurses will strike all day on June 12.

Government doctors last month staged an identical protest, and more than 2,800 government physicians staged a two-hour strike to press their demands for equal rights as their private sector counterparts.

The strike ended the same evening when the prime minister immediately intervened, promising to study the physicians demands.

"We are planning to strike until we receive a written commitment from the government," Mr. Salameh stressed.

Save water...
every drop
counts

EMBASSY OF INDIA AMMAN

The Embassy of India regrets to inform with profound grief the sad demise of

Mr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy,
former President of India,

on Saturday June 1, 1996. A condolence book will remain open at the embassy, First Circle, Jabal Amman, on Wednesday 5th June and Thursday 6th June from 0900 to 1300 hours.

WHAT'S GOING ON

PLAY

"School 2000" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

LECTURE

"What War Did to the Iraqi Environment" by Dr. Leith Qassab at Al-Haram Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

Photography exhibit by American photographer George Vass entitled "Passage Across the Jordan" at the American Center, until June 21.

Works by Rafic Majzoub at the French Cultural Centre, until June 27.

Paintings by artist Issam Taintawi at Balad Art Gallery, Carpenter Street, until June 24. Also a display of jewelry crafted by artists Sami Raja and Zina Marwaf, until June 18.

Photography exhibit by Yusef Al-Ali at Zetouch University, until June 18.

Works by Ahmed Nawash at the Jordan Plastic Arts Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 29. (Tel. 623297)

U.N. disarmament body may admit Iraq, Israel, N. Korea

GENEVA (R) — The United States has tentatively endorsed a proposal by South Africa to admit 23 states — including Iraq, Israel and North Korea — to the conference on disarmament, diplomats said Tuesday.

The United Nations-sponsored forum, the world's main disarmament negotiating body, is expected to debate the controversial proposal at a plenary Thursday, they added.

But it was far from clear whether all 23 countries would agree to Pretoria's compromise under which they would have to renounce their individual right to veto conference decisions, according to diplomats familiar with the secret discussions.

The move to break the deadlock over expansion comes as the 38-member conference is in the final stages of concluding a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The pact to prohibit nuclear blasts would include an inspection regime.

"There is great suspense. It seems that the U.S. delegation has instructions to accept this scenario in principle," a European negotiator told Reuters.

"There are also rumours that three or four countries have not replied yet, such as Iraq, Israel as well as Colombia which currently presides over the Non-Aligned Movement," he

added. South African diplomats in Geneva were not immediately available for comment, but an American official familiar with the discussions told Reuters: "It has not been signed by any country but South Africa at present."

"It would be premature to guess what it would take to get 23 separate countries to come up with an agreement. They are quite dissimilar in attitude," he added.

The 23 include Iraq — currently under U.N. sanctions — as well as Israel, one of the three nuclear "threshold" states.

Another diplomat said: "The Americans are not the problem. The problem will be whether the 23 countries would accept they are in a condition of inferiority in the conference."

"I'm not sure Iraq, Colombia and Syria would go along."

The forum's rules of procedure state: "All member states of the conference shall take part in its work in conditions of full equality as independent states in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the U.N. Charter."

Under the South African proposal, the 23 countries would make an oral pledge to renounce their individual veto rights if admitted as a group. If the conference accepts this, they

would write individually to the U.N. confirming their promise.

Last September the conference took a first step towards admitting the 23 states by adopting a consensus decision saying they would all assume membership "at the earliest possible date to be decided by the conference".

But since then, there has been no movement.

Some of the countries have been waiting more than a decade to join the Geneva forum, which in March 1995 also began negotiations on a treaty to halt production of fissile material.

The conference, which in 1992 negotiated a ban on chemical weapons, takes decisions by consensus. The pact, now ratified by 53 states, is still short of the 65 needed for entry into force.

The 23 states, in order of application, are: Norway, Finland, Austria, Turkey, Senegal, Bangladesh, Spain, Vietnam, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, New Zealand, Chile, Switzerland, South Korea, Belarus, Ukraine, Israel, Slovak Republic, North Korea, Iraq, South Africa, Colombia and Syria.

Another 12 countries — including Ireland, Greece and Kuwait — have also been waiting years for entry. They would not be part of this expansion, and could be expected to complain bitterly.

Sunflowers planted on Ukraine silo

PERVOMAISK, Ukraine (R) — Defence ministers of the United States, Ukraine and Russia planted sunflowers on the site of a former Soviet missile silo Tuesday, celebrating Ukraine's new status as a country without nuclear arms.

The ministers dug into rich earth recently used to cover up silo No. 110 on the now-disarmed former cold war missile base of Pervomaisk and planted six flowers in an emotional ceremony.

"By the actions we are taking we are ensuring that our children and our grandchildren will live in peace," U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry told counterparts Valery Shmarov of Ukraine and Pavel Grachev of Russia.

The ceremony marked Ukraine's final shipment of Soviet-era warheads back to Russia for destruction at the weekend.

Three years ago, Ukraine was the world's third most powerful nuclear state and Pervomaisk housed SS-19 and SS-24 missiles with more than 700 warheads targeted at the United States.

But Ukraine has now got rid of all of its 4,400 strategic and tactical nuclear missiles under a 1994 deal with Moscow and Washington to go non-nuclear.

"I would like to wish for the Ukrainian people that there should always be sunflowers and wheat in the ground here," Gen. Grachev said with a smile after he, Mr. Shmarov and Mr. Perry used shiny new spades to plant the sunflowers.

There are now 1,200 plants in the ground

over the former missile silo, one of more than 80 at the Pervomaisk Base. The three men also flew here in January to set off an explosive charge that destroyed Silo No. 110.

Mr. Perry and Mr. Shmarov Tuesday also signed a deal under which the U.S. will provide Ukraine with another \$43.1 million to help clean up its two former missile bases and provide housing for retired members of the Ukrainian Missile Forces.

Ukraine, the second former Soviet nuclear republic to disarm after Kazakhstan, inherited about 1,600 long-range nuclear warheads, 300 cruise missiles and 2,500 tactical nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union when Kiev declared its independence in August 1991.

The former Soviet Republic of Belarus has 18 nuclear warheads remaining on its territory and is scheduled to ship all of those back to Russia by year's end.

That would leave only Russia with nuclear arms from the former Soviet Union, which is now broken up into 15 independent republics.

Following his fourth visit to Pervomaisk in four years, Mr. Perry flew to Germany to address students Wednesday at the George Marshall International Military Centre in Garmisch, where military officers from former Communist states learn to operate military establishments under democracies.

Mr. Perry will also visit Portugal before flying home to Washington.

Australia's new gun laws face opposition

SYDNEY (R) — Australia's planned tough new gun laws, proposed in the wake of the Port Arthur massacre of 35 people, will not be in force nationally until at least September, according to Australia's police ministers Tuesday.

But even then they may not be uniform or as tough as Australian Prime Minister John Howard has proposed, as the political backlash against the laws continues to build.

A massive weekend rally by gun owners and talk of political desertion from the rural-based National Party are putting pressure on legislators to weaken the planned new laws.

Queensland state National Party official David McClintock Tuesday warned of an electoral backlash unless his party opposed the new laws.

A meeting of the state's largest National Party branch Tuesday night may consider forming a new party.

"If resolutions are put at the meeting to start a new political party and a majority of the people at the meeting approve that resolution, then there you have the makings of it," Mr. McClintock told reporters Tuesday.

The National Party is a coalition partner in Mr. Howard's conservative government and also shares government in all but two of Australia's six states, which have jurisdiction over firearms.

Australia's deputy prime minister and National Party leader, Tim Fischer, Tuesday played down signs of a political split in his party over the new gun laws.

Mr. Fischer said extremist elements were fomenting unrest in rural Australia. "There is massive misinformation," he said.

"This is not about disarmament, it is about a tougher gun control situation, the main impact of which will be on the likes of Melbourne and Sydney," he added.

Mr. Howard has already banned the importation of rapid-fire weapons, but it is up to each of the six states and two territories to enact the new gun laws.

Australia's police ministers on May 10 agreed to ban all automatic and semi-automatic weapons and register firearms.

But only the southern island state of Tasmania, site of the April 28 massacre by a lone gunman, and the small Australian capital territory have outlawed rapid-fire weapons.



A pro-democracy demonstrator scuffles with a policeman Tuesday as he burns a portrait of Chinese Premier Li Peng outside the Xinhua News Agency, China's de facto embassy in the British colony. Hong Kong democrats were marking the seventh anniversary of the June 4 Beijing massacre with marches, petitions, a marathon and a candle-lit vigil (Reuters photo)

Tiananmen anniversary passes quietly under police scrutiny

BEIJING (AFP) — A strong but discreet police surveillance ensured a calm seventh anniversary of the crushing of China's pro-democracy movement Tuesday, with only one known arrest.

The government also rejected any official review of the massacre in which according to its own account hundreds of people were killed.

Tiananmen Square, the focal point of the turmoil and violence of 1989, was more relaxed than for any of the previous anniversaries, although sizeable back-up forces were in nearby sidestreets in case of an incident.

The police presence on the square was noticeably low-key, as it was around the Haidian University district, where shoppers and students were not confronted by any overt police checks.

Security had been stepped up at Beijing University — the cradle of the student-led 1989 protests — where students reported no incidents during the night.

Roadblocks that have in previous years prevented foreign-plated cars from entering Haidian around June 3-4 were absent, although some extra security could be seen at certain key road junctions.

In Tiananmen Square, plainclothes police were still in evidence Tuesday, although their attempts to blend in showed a slight improvement on recent years, having discarded straw hats and dark glasses.

Unmarked police cars and coaches with tinted windows maintained a vigil on the fringes of the square, but the foot patrols showed little of the nervous tension so evident in the past.

At one point early Tuesday afternoon, an elderly man sat down cross-legged in the square facing the Monument to the People's Heroes, the heart of the 1989 demonstrations, and refused to move.

After being quietly questioned by uniformed police, he was gently lifted and transported off the square in the back of a trishaw pedalled by a policeman.

It was unknown if he was later charged with any offence.

In the only official comment on the anniversary, Foreign Ministry spokesman

Shen Guofang stressed the importance that maintaining social stability had played in China's economic development since 1989.

"If China is plunged into chaos and without any economic growth, this will not only bring harm to the interests of China and its surrounding countries, it will also mean disaster to the world," Mr. Shen said.

Asked if the government had considered revising — as requested in petitions signed by dissidents and intellectuals — the label of "counter-revolutionary disturbance" it hung on the 1989 movement, Mr. Shen made it clear that no official reassessment was in the pipeline.

"Many years have passed and a conclusion has already been established. Therefore I do not want to make any more comment," Mr. Shen said.

According to the Chinese authorities, around 300 people died when troops stormed the square seven years ago, although some foreign observers have put the figure as high as several thousand.

In Hong Kong, a candlelit rally in memory of the Tiananmen dead and in support of the democracy movement was being held Tuesday night.

Numbers have dwindled since more than one million people attended pro-democracy rallies in Hong Kong after the Beijing clampdown.

But last year it drew 20,000 people and campaigners have vowed to pursue demonstrations after Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule on July 1 next year.

The Taiwan authorities made an anniversary call for China to allow democracy and freedom.

"Any actions to fight for freedom and democracy in any society must be protected and respected," Kao Koon-Lian, vice chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), told a seminar organised by pro-democracy activists.

Without specifically mentioning the Tiananmen incident, the vice chairman of Taiwan's top mainland policy planning body said his government was willing to pass on its democratic experiences to the mainland.

Bhutto invites Indian premier to join search for peace in S. Asia

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has invited India's new leadership to hold peace talks with Pakistan in a bid to end tensions in South Asia.

"As civilised nations, let us sit across the table for a search for lasting peace," Ms. Bhutto said in a congratulatory message to newly-elected Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, made public here Tuesday.

Ms. Bhutto said the two nations should use the opportunity "to open a new chapter in our relations and lay down the foundations of a peaceful South Asia, based on equitable conflict resolution and reconciliation."

The two nations have fought three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947, two of them over the disputed province of Kashmir.

Tensions escalated in 1989 after Muslim militants stepped up a separatist campaign in the Indian part of Kashmir. India blames Pakistan for the insurgency, which has since claimed more than 12,000 lives.

Pakistan denies the charge but vows to continue its political and diplomatic support to

what it calls the Kashmiris' "legitimate struggle for self-determination."

Political commentators in Islamabad, stressing that the wars occurred under the Congress Party's rule, hope India's new coalition might try to improve ties with Pakistan.

Ms. Bhutto said her government looked forward to working with Mr. Deve Gowda's government to create an environment conducive to peace, security and development.

Reiterating her offer of talks to resolve the "core issue" of Kashmir, Ms. Bhutto said she was "encouraged" by references in Mr. Deve Gowda's Janata Dal party manifesto to work with Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

Foreign secretaries of the two countries last met here in January 1994 for a two-day session that ended in deadlock.

Pakistan insists on implementation of a United Nations resolution calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir, while India rejects the demand, claiming Kashmir is an integral part of India.

Mr. Deve Gowda, who

assumed office last Saturday, has already promised that he would take steps to ease tension with Pakistan.

"As far as Pakistan is concerned, I have an open mind. I'll definitely take an initiative to defuse the tension between the two countries," he told reporters on the eve of his swearing-in ceremony.

The News, a local daily, said former premier "Narasimha Rao used bluff and bluster more often than words of good cheer to deal with Pakistan" whereas Mr. Deve Gowda has adopted "a more cooperative stance."

"If there ever has appeared a chance to discuss Pakistan's stand on some major issues with a new government it will be now," said Mubashir Hassan, a former Pakistani finance minister and member of the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy.

He said the new Indian foreign minister, I.K. Gujral, had been active the last six years in making "some changes" in India's policy towards Pakistan, while Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav was known to want a peaceful solution to the problem.

Naked driver gets dressing down

SINGAPORE (AFP) — A 34-year-old housing agent was fined 2,000 dollars (\$1,428) by a court here for twice driving his car without any clothes on, television reported. The court heard that Andrew Chong was naked when he drove around a car park in January. Channel Five station said. He reportedly drove slowly past a 13-year-old girl who reported him to the police. Two months later, Mr. Chong repeated the act, causing annoyance to a 16-year-old girl, Channel Five said, adding that he was penalised for the two "obscene acts."

Father celebrates son with anti-aircraft guns

BEIJING (R) — A man in northeast China borrowed two anti-aircraft guns and drove down the main street of his town firing into the sky to celebrate his baby son's one-month anniversary, an official newspaper has reported. The man, in the town of Jiaohu in Jilin province, fixed the guns to a vehicle and fired more than 500 rounds during his celebratory drive, sending residents running for cover. The Guangxi Daily's May 31 edition said. The police have arrested him and nine others over the incident, and are investigating how he managed to borrow the guns.

China's Yeti Museum attracts 1,000 people a day

BEIJING (AFP) — A new Yeti Museum in China is attracting 1,000 tourists a day despite its remote location and a lack of conclusive evidence that the creature exists, Xinhua reported. The museum, which opened on May 17 in a remote area of Hubei province, exhibits samples of red hair from the mythical half-man half-ape, and models built from witness testimony from locals in the heavily-forested Shennongjia Valley. Known as "big-foot" in Chinese, the Yeti-like creature is believed to stand two metres (6.6 feet) tall, have feet around 40 centimetres (16 inches) long and live in the valley. "All the materials in the museum are genuine," said Chen Renlin, chairman of the Shennongjia Cultural Research Society, adding that most exhibits came from first-hand sources in the valley. However, a whole string of scientific expeditions into the valley since 1950, including a large mission last year, have failed to unearth any conclusive proof that Big Foot exists.

'Beauticians' damage 10,000 faces a year in China

SHANGHAI (AFP) — China's booming beauty industry caused more than 200,000 accidents throughout the country last year, a newspaper reported Monday. The Xinmin Evening News report did not specify the accidents but said an average of 10,000 faces has been damaged by beauticians every year in the past five years. Last year, a woman who wanted dimple added to her face was disfigured after her operation in Shanghai, the report said. The report said the number of beauty parlours registered in China exceeded one million, with more than five million people working in the industry — almost as many as the population of Hong Kong. It quoted experts as saying that the total number of beauticians in the rest of the world was only a fraction of the number in China. The newspaper said that there were many illegal beauty schools in France that sold doctoral degrees or other diplomas to Chinese and overseas Chinese beauticians.

Guatemala army accused of meddling in murder trial

GUATEMALA CITY (R) — A leading Guatemalan human rights group Monday protested the freeing from jail of eight soldiers pending their trial for the 1995 shooting massacre of 11 indigenous Guatemalans.

The October 1995 massacre of the Guatemalans, who had returned from political exile in Mexico, led to the resignation of a defence minister and top army official, but the army has maintained the soldiers fired in self defence after provocation.

The eight soldiers were released from jail over the weekend and put under house arrest after a judge ruled that the weapons they were carrying at the time of the massacre had not been fired.

Fifteen other soldiers accused of involvement in the crime remain in jail.

The soldiers' release shocked observers including the Catholic Church and the United Nations.

Maria Estela Lopez, a lawyer with human rights group the Menchu Foundation, blasted the decision as an attempt to meddle with the outcome of the trial.

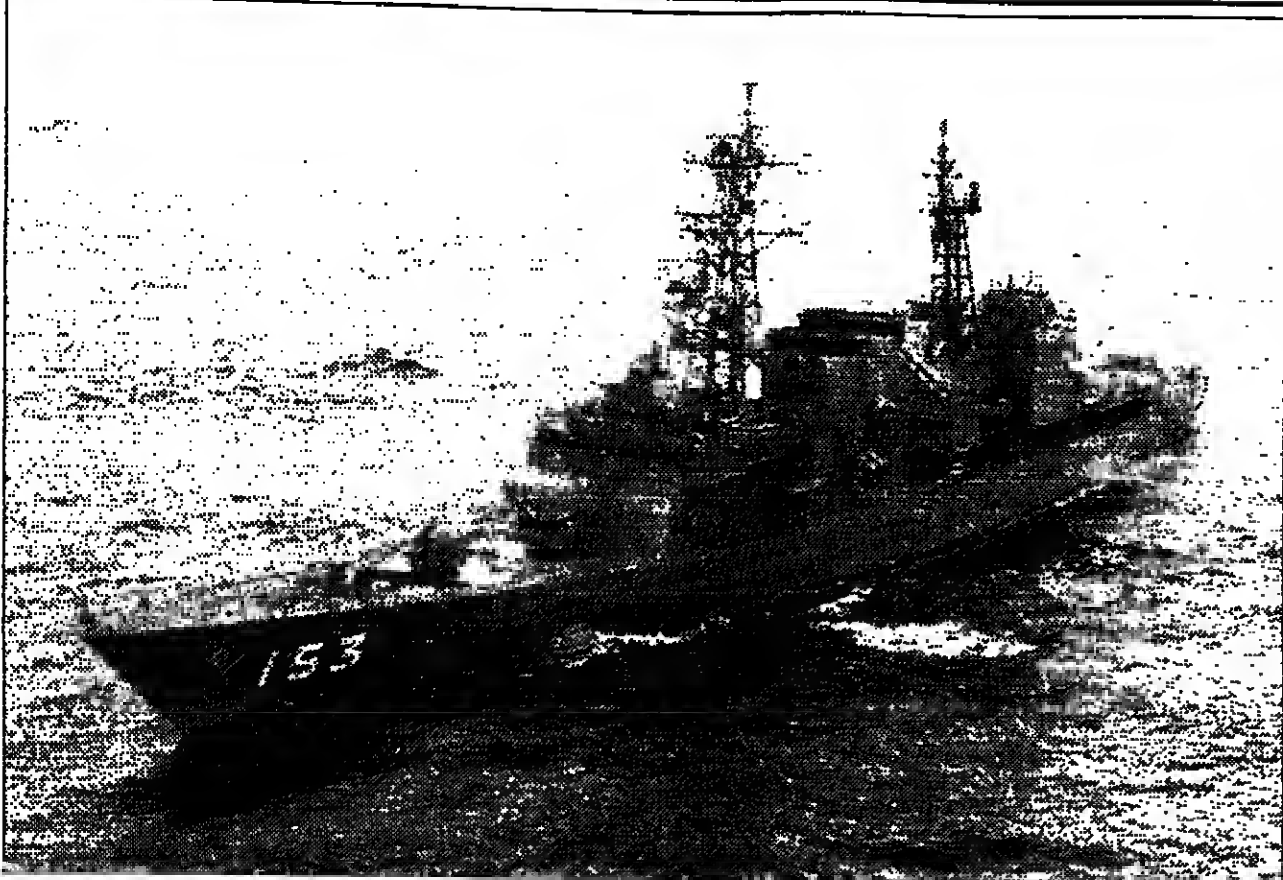
"There is intervention in this trial on the part of the army," Ms. Lopez said. "This is an abuse of authority, an abuse of power."

The military, who observers sometimes describe as the real power in Guatemala because of its enormous behind-the-scenes influence, has been known to lean on judges and courts to swing verdicts in sensitive trials.

Judge Victor Hugo Jimenez, a judge in Cobá, a town 200 kilometres north of the capital, freed the soldiers after saying ballistic reports showed their weapons had not been fired. Critics charged that the army had kept custody of the weapons.

Ms. Lopez said the Menchu Foundation, named after 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu, would file a lawsuit against Judge Jimenez for letting the soldiers go.

The Guatemalan army has long been accused of killing with impunity throughout a 35-year war against a small guerrilla force. More than 100,000 people, mostly Indian civilians, have been killed in the conflict.



The Japanese destroyer Yuguri accidentally shot down a U.S. carrier-based military aircraft A-6E Intruder during RIMPAC naval exercise off Hawaii Monday (Renter photo)

Japanese destroyer downs U.S. jet in Pacific

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese destroyer accidentally shot down a U.S. attack aircraft during military exercises in the Western Pacific north of the Marshall Islands Tuesday, defence officials said.

The escort vessel Yuguri, operated by the Maritime Self-Defence Force, shot down an Intruder jet some 2,500 kilometres (1,600 miles) west of Hawaii, the officials said.

Both crew ejected and were in "good condition" after being rescued by a small boat sent by the Japanese destroyer and transferred to the U.S. aircraft carrier Independence by helicopter, the U.S. Navy in Hawaii said.

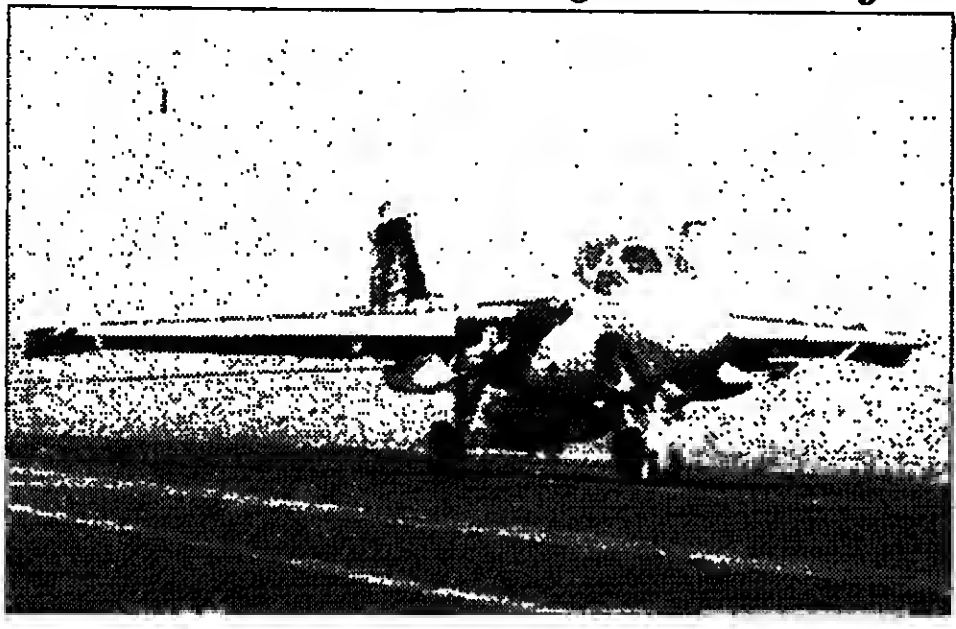
The accident was the second of its kind in a year and came as the two governments are attempting to ease tensions on the Japanese island of Okinawa over the size of the U.S. military presence there.

Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hiroshi Hashimoto was quick to react to the accident, saying: "It was regrettable, even if this happened during an exercise."

"We were relieved to hear that the two were rescued," he said.

"We need to inform the U.S. side of the results of the investigation into the accident."

The accident took place at 4:15 p.m. local time (0515 GMT Tuesday) during the RIMPAC exercises grouping the United States, Japan, Australia, Canada, Chile and South Korea. The six



An A-6 Intruder similar to the one that was accidentally shot down by the Japanese Navy warship Yuguri during a naval exercise off Hawaii Monday is seen on the deck of USS carrier Independence (Renter photo)

nation exercises, held every two years, began on May 22 and are to end on June 21.

A U.S. Navy statement said the Intruder was towing a target for ship-to-air gunnery practice when it was "damaged inadvertently by gunfire" from the destroyer, described by the Japanese as a 3,500-tonne escort vessel.

The statement said the destroyer was testing its "close-in weapons system" which is a gun with a high rate of fire.

"U.S. and Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force authorities are investigating the incident," the statement said.

Japanese Defence Agency officials said the gunfire

involved 20-millimetre artillery on board the destroyer. They said the accident took place at a longitude of 177 degrees east and a latitude of 18 degrees north, which is north of the Marshall Islands near Wake Island.

The Intruder, a two-seater all-weather attack aircraft, was attached to the Attack Squadron 115 of the Independence, which is usually based at the Japanese port of Yokosuka and took part in U.S. naval exercises off Taiwan in March.

The Japanese and U.S. vessels were sailing eastwards from Japan to waters off Hawaii when the accident occurred.

The Intruder can fire air

to-ground missiles as well as laser-guided and general purpose bombs on targets obscured by bad weather or darkness. It has a cruising speed of 760 kilometres (475 miles) an hour.

Japan's contingent in the exercises comprises eight patrol vessels and nine escort ships, including the Yuguri, and a submarine.

A similar accident occurred in Japan last year when an F-15 pilot in the Japan Air Self-Defence Force shot down another F-15 over the Sea of Japan.

With the accident attributed to pilot error, the Defence Agency recently continued to keep using the heat-seeking infra-red missile involved.

West, Russia appear on the road to compromise over NATO enlargement

BERLIN (AFP) — Russia and NATO appeared on the road to compromise Tuesday over the question of enlarging the alliance eastwards, with Moscow no longer objecting to the principle on condition military facilities are established close to its borders.

This beginning of a rapprochement emerged at a "16+1" meeting between the 16 NATO foreign ministers and their Russian counterpart Yevgeny Primakov in the German capital.

A North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) official who requested anonymity said that the foreign ministers assured Mr. Primakov that Russia had nothing to fear, telling him that there would be no major troop movements toward the Russian border.

According to NATO officials and ministerial sources, the Russian minister did not express objection to the enlargement of NATO, but said the government would object to the alliance establishing military infrastructure near Russia's borders.

Mr. Primakov, speaking to journalists after the meeting, expressed satisfaction that, according to him, NATO's enlargement was not "pre-determined" but should be discussed as part of the dialogue between Russia and NATO.

However the NATO official said there would be "no co-decision-making" on the matter of NATO enlargement. "NATO enlargement is not open to discussion with Russia," he stressed.

But at the same time Mr. Primakov was seen as



Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov (left) shakes hands with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana prior to a press briefing in Berlin Tuesday. NATO and Russia made clear they wanted to improve their troubled relationship, just two weeks before the Russian presidential elections (Renter photo)

expressing a "realistic" Russian position, more inclined to compromise on the question of NATO enlargement, which Moscow has been objecting to. The Western allies' position has all along been that Russia cannot veto NATO enlargement.

At their meeting with Mr. Primakov, the ministers reaffirmed that the enlargement of NATO will take place, officials said.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, who chaired the meeting of about one hour, said he did not have the impression of any tension between NATO and Russia, although he declined to assess the development as a rapprochement.

Mr. Kinkel, NATO Secre-

tary General Javier Solana and Mr. Primakov himself all stressed the positive atmosphere of the session.

Mr. Primakov said that Russia was "ready to compromise" and wanted to develop relations with NATO. Mr. Kinkel said Mr. Primakov had issued an invitation for further talks in Moscow.

A U.S. State Department official said the Russian minister was "very constructive and cooperative," and that NATO and Russia had also made progress on security issues such as Bosnia.

However U.S. officials do not see any "watershed," indicating that the moderated Russian attitude was still "no big deal."

While Russia wants con-

tinued discussion of the enlargement question, the Western allies' position remained that the process will continue, as before, to go ahead gradually.

At the same time there will be talks about the terms of the enlargement, a U.S. source said.

The Western allies want closer security cooperation with Russia, and both Mr. Kinkel and Mr. Solana told Mr. Primakov they wanted Moscow to start implementing NATO's Partnership For Peace programme.

Like other former Soviet Bloc states, it has signed the programme, which associates states in military cooperation with NATO, but it has not concretised it in any way.

Dole says he can cut taxes, balance the budget

WARREN, Mich. (R) — Prospective Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole, in a campaign foray to a critical battleground state, called Monday for both tax cuts and a balanced budget.

In a speech to the Macomb County, Michigan, Community College in suburban Detroit, Sen. Dole said: "I believe we can cut taxes, reform the tax code and balance the budget. In fact we must, if we want to restore our nation to its full economic potential."

President Bill Clinton's Democrats immediately pounced on Sen. Dole's latest economic action blueprint as one that simply caters to all sides of the political spectrum by proposing seemingly contradictory goals — a tax cut, which reduces federal revenues, along with budget-balancing.

"I can't imagine that anybody who supports a constitutional amendment to balance the budget would also support a \$600 or \$700 billion tax reduction simultaneously," said Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota. "I mean, it is incredible. It is preposterous."

Sen. Dole gave no specifics on the size of tax cut he would seek, how quickly the budget should be balanced or what type of tax reform he wants. But he had said Friday that the budget could be balanced within four years, and he has been conferring with advisers and conservative economists on a tax cut proposal. Some of them favour a 15 per cent cut.

The Republican challenger is running far behind Mr. Clinton in opinion polls forecasting Nov. 5 election preferences. He has been trying to refine his stand on issues that will set him clearly apart from Mr. Clinton and reignite his campaign.

But Sen. Dole's supporters are encouraged by last week's convictions in Arkansas of three former Clinton associates on bank fraud charges. And Sen. Dole himself has stepped up attacks on Mr. Clinton's character and says he feels the tide turning.

In his speech, Sen. Dole also called for a rollback of

tax increases backed by Mr. Clinton in 1993 and challenged Mr. Clinton to urge his democratic colleagues in Congress to vote for an amendment to the constitution requiring a balanced budget. He has said he would bring the issue to a vote one more time before leaving the Senate by the end of next week.

"When it comes to balancing the budget, as with everything else, Bill Clinton's promises are like the tape in (the movie) Mission Impossible — they self-destruct in 10 seconds," Sen. Dole declared.

Addressing Mr. Clinton, he added: "If you truly want to stand with the American people, tell your Democratic colleagues in the Senate to vote for the balanced budget amendment."

"Do it in public. Do it now. No winks. No nods. No behind the scenes manoeuvres. No excuses. Do it loudly. Do it clearly. As they say in the commercial, just do it," Sen. Dole said.

Asked by reporters about Sen. Dole's challenge on the constitutional amendment, Mr. Clinton side-stepped and challenged the senator to come back and negotiate a specific agreement to bring the budget into balance.

"Why don't we do it right now?" Mr. Clinton replied. "We've got all the money we need. We can balance the budget tomorrow — all he has to do is come back to the negotiations."

In Michigan, Sen. Dole said Mr. Clinton supported billions of dollars of wasteful spending on projects like a boating marina in Key West, Florida, and an Alpine slide in Puerto Rico.

"It's no mystery what's bailing America back. It's no force of nature or act of fate. It's the wrongheaded, outdated, liberal policies that can all be summed up in one word, 'Clintonomics,'" he said.

Michigan is a key swing state in the election and Macomb County a bell-weather suburban district heavily populated by conservative-leaning middle class voters. They have backed both Republicans and Democrats in the past but currently seem to be leaning towards Mr. Clinton.

Communists make coalition offer to Yeltsin rivals

MOSCOW (R) — Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov proposed Tuesday forming a coalition with some of his rivals to challenge Boris Yeltsin in Russia's presidential election on June 16. Interfax News Agency said.

The agency quoted Mr. Zyuganov as saying in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk that he was ready to offer "posts in the government to all those who represent 'the third force'."

The term is usually applied to three other candidates — liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky, popular retired General Alexander Lebed and eye surgeon Svyatoslav Fyodorov.

"We are holding intensive talks," Mr. Zyuganov said. Opinion polls show Mr. Zyuganov has lost his early lead over Mr. Yeltsin and the Communist leader appears to be searching for ways to revitalise his campaign.

Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Zyuganov are expected to face each other in a second round of the election and are manoeuvring to win the backing of those candidates dropping out after the first ballot.

The second round is held between the two top contenders if none wins more than 50 per cent of the vote on June 16. Mr. Zyuganov Monday met Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who is also running for the presidency.

Gennady Seleznyov, Communist speaker of the lower house of parliament, was quoted by Interfax as saying no coalition was possible with the ultra-nationalists before June 16. But his remarks left the door open for talks after the first round.

Mr. Yavlinsky, Gen. Lebed and Dr. Fyodorov have tried and failed to unite to form a "third force" challenge to Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Zyuganov, both far ahead in the polls.

Gen. Lebed and Mr. Yavlinsky have publicly ruled out cooperating with the Communists.

Mr. Zyuganov's coalition offer came as Russian negotiators met separatist Chechen leaders to prevent new fighting in the rebel region and discuss a mutual release of prisoners.

A durable Chechen peace is widely seen as crucial to Mr. Yeltsin's reelection chances.

Meanwhile Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said Tuesday President Yeltsin could not win reelection alone and should create a coalition government including most of his presidential rivals.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy, claiming the post of propaganda minister or justice minister for himself, set out an improbable scenario under which eight of the 11 presidential candidates would join forces and Mr. Yeltsin would preside over a government including Mr. Zhirinovskiy and Mr. Zyuganov.

"A broad coalition is needed in the current transformation period," Mr. Zhirinovskiy said in a radio interview which formed part of his campaign for the June 16 election.

"I would create as broad a coalition as possible to give all political forces a chance to work for the good of Russia."

Mr. Zhirinovskiy trails far behind Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Zyuganov in opinion polls and appears to be looking for ways to win a share of power. He last week proposed joining forces with Mr. Zyuganov.

All his cooperation proposals have been rebuffed so far, although Communist officials said Mr. Zyuganov met Mr. Zhirinovskiy for talks Monday.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy later told Interfax News Agency that many voters feared the consequences if Mr. Yeltsin or Mr. Zyuganov won the election.

He said Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin had promised to arrange a meeting between him and Mr. Yeltsin. Mr. Zhirinovskiy vowed to convince the president that he had "no chance of winning." There has been no confirmation that the meeting will take place.

Swamp crater holds elusive U.S. crash remains

MIAMI (R) — Recovery workers digging through the Everglades have uncovered a crater filled with human and jet remains which had eluded investigators for more than three weeks after the fatal crash of ValuJet Flight 592, an official said late Monday.

"We feel that at this point we now have got a crater that could have possibly a lot more of the remains in it," Joe Farrell, head of the salvage operation at the crash site, told CNN. "We could not find but 50 per cent of the aircraft so far, so it's been a big mystery: where is it?"

Atlanta-bound ValuJet Vjet.O Flight 592 plunged into the Everglades northwest of Miami International Airport shortly after takeoff on May 11, killing all 110 people on board.

The incident has perplexed investigators because much of the jet as well as many of its victims were still missing after more than three weeks of intensive search efforts.

Before Monday, less than half the jet had been pulled from the swamp, and only 24 victims had been positively identified.

CNN reported that the new crater was about 20 by 30 feet wide (six by nine metres), but Mr. Farrell, president

of Resolve Towing Salvage, said he did not know its depth.

Workers dressed in special bio-hazard suits to protect themselves against the swamp pulled from the new crater the largest pieces yet found of the doomed aircraft, as well as the bodies of more of its victims.

"We are coming up with much more human remains than we ever had in the past, already this evening," Mr. Farrell said in the television interview.

He also told reporters Monday that workers recovered photograph albums and wallets from the new crater.

Salvage workers said the wreckage in the new crater could include the DC-9's wings.

The discovery came on the third day in which workers used heavy equipment to dig and sift through the mud at the crash site.

Also Monday, a truck driver who had been transporting wreckage of the jet was arrested on charges that he removed and hid parts of the plane as souvenirs instead of delivering them to federal investigators, the FBI said.

Michael Gadsden, 35, of Fort Lauderdale, a Resolve Salvage employee, was arrested after an investigation into reports that pieces of the crashed DC-9 had disappeared.

Federal Bureau of Investigation spokesman Paul Miller said.

Federal agents had searched Mr. Gadsden's apartment Friday and found hidden in a closet two aircraft parts identified as belonging to the doomed jet. One was a piece of the fuselage, while the other was part of a circuit breaker panel from the aircraft's cockpit, considered an important key to discovering the cause of the May 11 crash.

"He claims that he took them for souvenirs," Mr. Miller said. "But of course one of these parts, the circuit breaker panel, is a very significant piece, and part of the puzzle."

Theories so far have looked at the possibility of explosion or fire aboard the plane, possibly linked to combustible oxygen canisters it was carrying in its hold.

Resolve's president, Joe Farrell, said he had fired Mr. Gadsden immediately. "There was too many people around to strangle him so I terminated his employment right then," he told reporters.

McDougal, a friend of Mr. Clinton's. In videotaped testimony, Mr. Clinton hotly denied the accusations and said he never spoke to Mr. Hale about the matter.

A Little Rock jury convicted Mrs. McDougal, her ex-husband Jim McDougal and Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker on fraud charges brought by Whitewater Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr.

Sen. D'Amato's announcement came after Mr. Starr said he had no objection to granting Mr. Hale immunity. Mr. Hale, through his lawyer, has said he would refuse to testify, citing Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination.

Mr. Hale, who was sentenced in March to 28 months in prison on fraud charges brought by Mr. Starr, says he now fears prosecution by state authorities.

D'Amato moves to call Hale as Whitewater witness

NEW YORK (R) — The last big battle of the Senate Whitewater Committee is about to begin as the committee's chairman vowed Monday to grant immunity from prosecution to a man who claims Bill Clinton pressed him to make an illegal \$300,000 loan.

New York Republican Alfonse D'Amato said he will ask his committee Wednesday to approve immunity for David Hale, a key prosecution witness in the Little Rock trial of Mr. Clinton's former associates.

He added that he was confident he would win Democratic support so Hale could testify before the controversial committee ended its work on June 14.

Mr. Hale, former head of an investment firm that made government-subsidised business loans, has claimed that Mr. Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas personally pressured him to make an illegal \$300,000 loan to Susan

McDougal, a friend of Mr. Clinton's. In videotaped testimony, Mr. Clinton hotly denied the accusations and said he never spoke to Mr. Hale about the matter.

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Steady effort to face change

THE TRILATERAL summit in Aqaba today grouping His Majesty the King, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat assumes crucial dimensions in light of the new regional circumstances in which it is being held and the significance of the common concerns that the three leaders will address.

The importance of the summit partly derives from the effort it will make for reaching an accurate assessment of the new situation in the Middle East following the victory of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu in the Israeli elections and for the understanding of what needs to be done to face the challenges posed by the political sea change in the Jewish state.

Beyond these two immediate aims lies the strategic goal of forging a wider and more solid Arab front which will be the best guarantee in facing up to the new challenge in regional peace-making.

A major priority for the three leaders today is ensuring that the peace process does not suffer any setbacks as a result of the expected formation of a right-wing government in Israel. While the peace treaties that Jordan and Egypt have signed with Israel are not expected to be affected after Netanyahu assumes office, there are genuine fears that the Palestinian-Israeli track of the peace negotiations will be stalled. Such an eventuality will have direct repercussions for Cairo's and Amman's relations with Israel since the two Arab capitals have worked for the attainment of comprehensive peace. And unless the Palestinian problem is resolved on the basis of an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and granting the Palestinians their right to self-determination the cause of peace in the region will remain unfulfilled.

Hence is the urgent need for coordination among the three Arab leaders. Hence is also the need for frank and open discussions that can lead to the formulation of a joint stand with which the Arabs can approach the new Israeli government and what changes it might want to introduce in the game plan for the region. The Palestinian cause will be better served if the Palestinian leadership has the support of other Arab countries, particularly Jordan and Egypt due to the open channels that they have with Israel. But the effectiveness of this support will greatly depend on the level of trust and openness with which the common concerns are addressed. There is no denying that much of that was lacking in the past. But the new challenges posed by the new political environment in Israel make it imperative that a new chapter of cooperation among the three sides, and among all Arabs, is opened. It is hoped that this necessity will lead to the consolidation of the fresh effort that was launched in Cairo last month.

The results of the meeting in Aqaba today will have a major impact on the course of the other trilateral Arab summit that will take place in Saudi Arabia on Saturday. The hope is that the different Arab efforts can be meshed and pooled and as soon as possible, to serve our common cause.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday tackled the problem of pollution which has been plaguing the town of Fuheis for more than four decades. Mahmoud Al Rimawi said the sit-in in the town residents plan to stage next Sunday points to an important deficiency in the field of environmental safety. It is really strange not to have an environment ministry at a time when the number of ministerial portfolios is on the rise, he said. He attributed the continuation of the problem in the town to the absence of a central government institution that would follow up the issue until it is resolved. It is clear that the issue of the environment has become a central issue in the world and one of the criteria of development and progress, as is the case with health and education, he said. It is illogical to talk about modernisation and development without addressing such a major issue which is still lost between bureaucracy and several government departments, he continued.

AL DUSTOUR Arabic daily, in its editorial, commented on His Majesty King Hussein's meeting Monday with editors of local newspapers. The daily said King Hussein briefed the editors on local and regional developments and Jordan's stand vis-à-vis these developments. No doubt, the King shows keen interest in the press which became an integral part of the society and which is shouldering serious responsibilities. His Majesty called on the press to avoid defamation, slander and pessimism, to remind journalists of their responsibilities in this age which can be called the age of the mass media. The newspaper said the Jordanian press will not maintain its leading role and preserve its credibility unless it acts in a responsible manner and follows the example of leading newspapers in advanced countries.

Washington Watch

Israeli elections — a challenge for the Arabs

By Dr. James Zogby

THE OUTCOME of Israel's elections poses serious challenges for Arabs and Americans alike.

What emerged clearly from the cloudy election results is that Israel is deeply divided politically and socially fragmented. Such internal weakness would have presented Labour's Shimon Peres with enormous difficulties had he been reelected. A Labour-led government with no electoral mandate could not have taken the steps necessary to resolve final status issues with Palestinians or complete a land-for-peace agreement with Syria.

A fragile Labour-led coalition could not have stopped settlement expansion, or made significant and meaningful concessions to Palestinians on land and water rights, Jerusalem, commerce, refugees and sovereignty. Nor could they have found the political will or necessary votes to leave the Golan Heights.

About all that such a weak Labour government could have done would have been to maintain the fiction of a peace process — this being the minimum necessary to satisfy the political needs of the U.S. and some of Israel's Arab negotiating partners. From a U.S. perspective, too much political capital and strategic planning have been invested in this search for a comprehensive peace to see it aborted at this point.

It is this need to pacify the U.S. that has caused Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu to begin to make vague statements

about supporting a peace process.

But Netanyahu's concept of peace is quite different from that which was envisioned by the disciples of the current peace process — and worlds apart from the minimum just requirements of the Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese.

Whether Netanyahu's charade of a peace process will be convincing enough to allow the U.S. to assert that there is continuity in the process is not at all certain. In no small measure this will depend on whether or not Netanyahu's pitch is accepted by the Arab World.

It should be recalled that this current push for a comprehensive Middle East peace emerged out of the post-cold war, post-Gulf war strategic thinking of President George Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker. It was their realisation that the U.S. could no longer reasonably operate in the Middle East with a two-track policy that led to efforts to reconcile Arabs and Israelis and achieve a comprehensive peace.

Most Arab states accepted both the premises and the ground rules established to govern the search for peace. In fact, it was Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's resistance to accept the land for peace formula and his challenge to the U.S. role in this process that provoked the confrontation that led to his demise.

Shamir was replaced by a Labour government that was weak but a willing participant in the U.S.-led process.

While the U.S. inspired the process and desired its successful completion, it did not play an active role in helping shape its outcome.

As a result, the asymmetry of power between Israel and the Palestinians and the weakness of the Labour government combined to distort the process. The agreements produced by the Israelis and the Palestinians were decidedly in Israel's favour — but they were agreements that could, if implemented, have resulted in realisation of Palestinian rights to self-determination. Despite their weaknesses, the mere fact of the agreements themselves were enough to excite U.S. policy makers and to sustain Arab involvement in the process. Summits in Casablanca and Amman, multilateral sessions at venues throughout the Arab World, regional security discussions, and trade delegations criss-crossing the region therefore all continued despite the fact that Palestinians were not, in any significant way, recipients of the benefits of peace.

Despite the continued closure of the West Bank and Gaza, and Israel's failure to comply with their agreements with the Palestinians, the rhetoric of Labour and Arab good-will seemed to be sufficient to sustain the process.

Now Likud inherits this process. While the peace agreements reached thus far have not been fairly implemented, they nevertheless exist. In assuming the leadership in Israel, Likud inherits the obliga-

tions and commitments of the Labour government. They inherit agreements co-sponsored by the U.S. And while the U.S. administration appeared to be willing to give Labour latitude in its failure to comply with these agreements, it remains to be seen whether similar latitude can or will be given to Likud.

Because Likud's rhetoric is clearly anti-peace and its past practice even more so, it should prove difficult for the Arab states to maintain the appearance of a peace process that has sustained the existing effort.

In fact, at this point, the Arabs have significant leverage which they can use to check Likud's policy and force the U.S. to use pressure to move peace forward.

So much has been invested in this search for a Middle East peace, expectations have been raised by its modest accomplishments and the international community has been excited by the prospects of its success.

It will serve no governments' interests to put a fig leaf over the crisis that has been precipitated by a Likud victory.

Likud may want to continue to reap the benefits of international legitimacy and economic activity created by the peace process. But they will want to do so on their terms — no territorial concessions with Syria and no discussion of final status issues with the Palestinians.

If Arab participants in the process do not act decisively in response to this crisis, the U.S. and other interested parties will not

be forced to act.

The Arabs can act, however, to expose the crisis and, in the process, precipitate a positive international response.

The Arabs can rescue the peace process. They can do so by demanding that Likud accept the ground rules that defined the process, i.e. fulfillment of U.N. Security Council resolutions and trading land for peace. They can insist that Likud commit to honouring existing agreements and fulfill its obligations to those agreements. They can demand a settlement freeze and serious final status talks on all issues including Jerusalem.

At the same time they can freeze all relations with the Likud government until these basic conditions are met. There should be no Arab participation in regional or multi-lateral discussions or conferences, no further confidence-building gestures to the Israeli government or business — no business as usual.

Such an Arab response should be seen as an extension of the limited refusal to participate in the Sharm Al Sheikh follow up meetings in the wake of the destructive Israeli assault on Lebanon. It would not be an anti-peace response, but a pro-peace effort to salvage the process from this crisis. Americans and Israelis must be helped to debate, in a dramatic and serious way, the implications of a collapse of the search for peace brought by the failure of the Israeli electorate to choose to continue the path towards peace.

In America, racial classification instead of colour-blind law

By Clint Bolick

WASHINGTON — The month of May brought the 100th anniversary of one of the most shameful episodes in American jurisprudence, the Supreme Court's decision on May 18, 1896, in Plessy vs. Ferguson, upholding the pernicious "separate but equal" doctrine.

Far from fading quietly into history, Plessy's core premise that the government may classify people on the basis of race remains alive and well, nourished by the same sort of liberal advocates who once vowed its demise.

The case of Homer Adolph Plessy was one of the earliest "public interest" lawsuits aimed at producing a favourable constitutional precedent. The litigation was financed by private railroad companies chafing under laws requiring them to segregate passengers by race.

Mr. Plessy was considered an ideal test plaintiff because, although light-complexioned and only one-eighth black, under Louisiana's race statute he was deemed black and consigned to railroad cars for "coloureds." When he purchased a first-class ticket and refused to sit in the segregated car, he was arrested.

In his argument, Mr. Plessy cited the 14th Amendment, which restrains state governments from violating civil rights. The results were disastrous. By eight to one, the Supreme Court held that the 14th Amendment was not "intended to abolish distinctions based upon colour" that were

"reasonable," in the words of Justice Henry B. Brown. Separation of the races was natural and did not imply inferiority, the majority concluded.

The sole dissenter, Justice John M. Harlan, disagreed vehemently. "In respect of civil rights," he wrote, the constitution does not "permit any public authority to know the race of those entitled to be protected in the enjoyment" of those rights.

Justice Harlan expounded the essential principle of equality under law: "Our constitution is colour-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. The law regards man as man, and takes no account of his surroundings or his colour when his civil rights as guaranteed by the supreme law of the land are involved."

Justice Harlan's eloquent words provided the rallying cry for the civil rights movement during its 58-year quest to overturn Plessy. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, founded in 1909, committed itself to the "abolition of colour-hypothecation and the substitution of straight Americanism."

In Brown vs. the Board of Education, Thurgood Marshall argued before the Supreme Court that the constitution denies "any power to make any racial classification in any governmental field."

It was "the dissenting opinion of Justice Harlan, rather than the majority opinion in Plessy vs. Ferguson," Justice Marshall declared, "that is in keeping with the scope and meaning of the 14th

Amendment. That the constitution is colour-blind is our dedicated belief."

In its 1954 decision, the court struck down the concept of "separate but equal." But the ruling failed to fully embrace Justice Harlan's dissent or to affirm, once and for all, that the constitution is colour-blind.

During the next 10 years, with the passage of civil rights laws, many who had once championed race neutrality, including Justice Marshall, began to harbour hopes that the government's power to discriminate could be harnessed for beneficent purposes.

The metamorphosis was complete by 1965. President Lyndon Johnson announced in a speech at Howard University: "We seek not just... equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and equality as a result." Thus commenced the modern era of official discrimination, characterised at various times as "remediation," "affirmative action" or "diversity."

So completely did liberals jettison their prior insistence on colour-blind policies that in his 1979 opinion in Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke, Justice Marshall derided Justice Harlan's discourse, saying: "We must remember... that the principle that the 'constitution is colour-blind' appeared only in the opinion of the lone dissenter."

Liberals abandoned their belief in equality of opportunity, embracing equal results and imposing a stifling race-conscious orthodoxy. "The

goal of parity between the races, decreed John E. Jacob, then head of the National Urban League, in 1985, "is the one constant that must be shared by anyone who presumes to hold a leadership position in the black community."

A century after Plessy, the U.S. government still classifies Americans by race, and on that basis determines in many instances where they can attend school, which congressional district they are assigned or for which contracts or jobs or scholarships they are eligible to compete.

Real-world examples are almost as common and perverse as in Plessy's day. Last year in Montgomery County, Maryland, two half-Asian, half-Caucasian girls were denied admission to a French-immersion programme at Maryvale Elementary because too few Asians attended the pair's current school. Moving these two students, officials argued, would further isolate the remaining Asian children. Officials were unpersuaded by the argument that the move would increase the tiny Asian population at Maryvale.

In Yonkers, New York, black children are bussed miles away from their homes and neighbourhood schools in order to preserve racial balance. Minnesota and Arkansas explicitly discriminate against non-black families who wish to adopt black children. Many other states discriminate informally.

The result of such restrictions: nationally, nearly half of black children wait more than four

years for adoption, compared with only 17 per cent of white children.

Liberals once staked their moral claim on the universality of civil rights. No longer. They have embraced race consciousness with fervour. Last year, after the University of California Regents voted to end affirmative action in admissions and hiring, Jesse Jackson said rather illogically: "To ignore race and gender is racist and sexist."

In this way, modern liberals perpetuate the Plessy decision by replacing the notion of "reasonable" racial classifications with the concept of "benign" discrimination. But America's tortured history provides abundant testimony that racial classifications are never reasonable or benign. They invariably divide and injure every American, white and black, male and female.

As Justice Harlan recognised, no middle ground exists. The government will either have the power to classify and discriminate or it won't.

"There is no caste here," Justice Harlan wrote. His noble aspiration remains as vibrant today as it was 100 years ago, and his prescription for a colour-blind constitution more urgent than ever.

The writer is litigation director at the Institute for Justice, a public interest law firm, and author of "The Affirmative Action Fraud." This article is reprinted from The New York Times.



Acting in concert

By Ali Kassab

This time last year I wrote the first article of this column which had a positive note to it. It was about the classical music concert held at the Citadel to celebrate Europe Day. On that occasion, the music was performed by a combination of European soloists and the symphony orchestra of the Armed Forces. This year I am glad to write a second article in the same vein about the second concert of this nature, with the difference that the music was performed this time by a combination of European soloists and Jordanian musicians from the National Music Conservatory of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

In addition to the performance, which was of the highest quality, the lighting scheme of the Citadel was designed and executed most ably by Suhail Elias, in a manner that was functional and that complemented both the location and the occasion. But the significance of the event goes well beyond the excellence of the performance and setting.

First of all, there is the political symbolism of the occasion. It highlights Europe's policy of building bridges of cooperation with the rest of the world, not only in the field of socio-economic development, but also in cultural exchanges. It also embodies a most important and wise strategic choice which Jordan has taken and which it pursues diligently, that of openness to the world and receptiveness to all cultures. Clearly this will not undermine Jordan's Arab cultural identity in any way; quite the opposite, it will enhance it. The much sought after Arab enlightenment will not come about through protectionist parochial practices, but through openness to, and positive interaction with, the world. Arabs will only make their presence felt, if they are as well versed with other cultures as their own. Only such a wide cultural reserve will permit them to interact positively with the rest of the world, and to develop their own culture into a dynamic and beneficial influence in the world.

In addition, the concert, and the rehearsals that led to it, were a perfect opportunity for young Jordanian performers, as they take their first steps into a cultural domain that is new to them, to meet and interact with performers who have reached world class in this field. The pedagogic benefits that accrue from such interaction are immeasurable.

A third benefit is that, through constant exposure to events of this nature, it may finally dawn on Jordanian photographers and television cameramen that the techniques of covering a concert are inherently different from those of covering a football match. An optimist to end all optimists, I hope that these artists in their own right, may eventually come to realise that they should take pictures of the performers during a special rehearsal, in the course of which they may stomp the ground in their cowboy boots, make an awful racket while changing films and lenses, and sporadically blind the performers with their flash guns. Then, on the day, they can take photographs of the veeps present before the performance begins, at which point they would disappear and leave the audience to enjoy the music in peace.

Well, forget that, and let us confine ourselves to the bounds of realism. All in all, this was an event which I hope to see develop into an annual occasion, because, if Jordan is to take its place on the world's cultural map, this is a good step in the right direction.

U.N. aid representative urges financial assistance to PNA

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A senior U.N. official called on Israel on Tuesday to lift its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to transfer tax revenues to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to save the Palestinian self-rule areas from financial collapse.

Terje Larsen, U.N. special envoy to the self-rule areas, said Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's administration was facing financial crisis and urged donor countries to speed up the disbursement of promised funds.

"The Palestinian (National) Authority is facing a fiscal crisis," Mr. Larsen told Reuters.

"The new Israeli government must quickly take steps together with the Palestinian (National) Authority and donor states to prevent a financial collapse of the Palestinian (National) Authority," he said.

"This could be done through increasing the number of Palestinians working in Israel to at least 70,000 by the end of this month, and through paying the authority a first advance of \$30 million which is owed from value added tax (VAT) and customs collected from Palestinians," he said.

Mr. Larsen said that the PNA's 1996 projected budget deficit was \$183 million. He said that raising the number of workers employed in Israel may help lower the deficit.

The U.N. representative and PLO officials said Israel owes the PNA millions of dollars from customs and VAT collected from West Bank and Gaza residents since Israel occupied the areas in 1967.

Israel has frequently sealed off the West Bank and the Gaza Strip following attacks by militants against Israelis, depriving tens of thousands of Palestinians from jobs in its territory. The most severe closure was imposed three months ago after militants launched the first of four bombings that killed 59 people in Israel.

Before the closure, more than 70,000 Palestinians worked in Israel. Now, only about 7,000 workers over the age of 40 work in Israel.

Mr. Larsen said unemployment in the Gaza Strip alone was one of the world's highest at more than 50 per cent. Palestinians complained that the closures have brought their economy to a halt and caused severe shortages in food and medical supplies.

Donor states, which had pledged \$2.5 billion over five years to support the Palestinian economy, complain that their aid was going to compensate Palestinians for losses from closures instead of developing the Palestinian economy.

Palestinians also complain that the disbursement of pledged funds was too slow.

Mr. Larsen said donor countries would discuss spending on disbursement of financial aid in Gaza on Friday at a meeting which will be attended by Mr. Arafat.

In London, Mr. Arafat urged British businessmen on Tuesday to bring much-needed investment funds to the West Bank and Gaza.

Declaring that 27 years of Israeli occupation had left the infrastructure of the Palestinian territory utterly destroyed, Mr. Arafat told an

audience of British business leaders: "We are starting from below zero." He added: "Our own business people have already started a programme of investment in Palestine. We would like to see you make contact with them."

"We need your help and support in all fields, we need to build the whole infrastructure — roads, schools, hospitals, telecommunications and sewage and power plants."

The West Bank and Gaza Strip might need to build as many as 470,000 new homes, Mr. Arafat said.

"We believe in a free market economy, not controlled and regulated by the state," Mr. Arafat said. "I am dreaming of a Middle Eastern Singapore in Palestine."

Mr. Arafat's host, British Trade Minister Lord Fraser, said that "unfortunately there is little evidence at present of U.K. involvement in major Palestinian projects."

Mr. Arafat was speaking on the final day of a two-day trip to Britain that has included a meeting with Prime Minister John Major, to whom Mr. Arafat explained how British businessmen could expect "encouraging" guarantees to invest in his homeland.

During his visit, Mr. Arafat called on Israeli general election winner Benjamin Netanyahu to respect peace agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

He urged Israel to pull its troops back from Hebron, the last of seven Palestinian West Bank cities the Jewish state agreed in March to hand over to the PNA.



KARAMEH DAM PROJECT: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan is briefed by Water and Irrigation Minister Samir Kaway and other officials on the Karameh dam project during a visit the Crown Prince paid to the project site on Tuesday. The JD 50 million dam is designed to hold 50 million cubic metres of water in its reservoir (Petra photo)

Netanyahu urges end to attacks on media

The Jerusalem Post

LIKUD attacks on the media and threats to "settle accounts" with journalists and to privatise the Israel Broadcasting Authority aroused a storm yesterday among politicians, the National Federation of Israeli Journalists, and the IBA.

Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu came out in defence of the media, saying it serves a vital role in democratic life. He noted that any debate on the media's functioning should be held in a responsible and cultured manner.

Posters calling for the dismissal of Channel 1 news anchor Haim Yavin and Channel 2 political correspondent Gadli Sukenik were seen at the Likud's victory rally Sunday night, where thousands of

activists reacted angrily when Mr. Netanyahu first mentioned the word "media."

IBA workers expressed concern over the Likud's threats, and especially MK Limor Livnat's statements about privatising the IBA and its allegedly faulty operation during the campaign. The workers noted that privatising the IBA meant firing at least half of them.

Livnat, who has been mentioned as a possible next communications minister, maintained that "it is not vengeance which propels us to privatise the IBA, but our world view."

Nevertheless, she stressed that "We have too many causes for grievance when it comes to the electronic media, in particular Channel 1. Its attitude was one of unmitigated discrimina-

tion against the Likud. There is a tendency among its journalists to demonise all Likud politicians and supporters, and to glorify all those on the Labour side."

"The journalists' private inclinations are too often expressed in the way they treat issues on the air. Their attitude to anyone who does not share their opinions and agenda is supercilious and confrontational. Likud politicians are interviewed with hostility and are cut off before completing a sentence."

She added that "The tendentiousness of the electronic media reached unprecedented proportions on election day. The radio kept telling voters every half-hour that Jewish right-wing extremists were seeking to assassinate (Shimon) Peres. Throughout the day,

they kept exhorting Arab voters to come out and vote to save Peres and prevent a Likud victory."

"But they were biased before election day, too. We could hardly get an interview for Netanyahu and when we fixed a date, they kept changing it again and again, until they found a spot at a time in which the ratings were lowest. If Peres refused to appear on the same programme with Netanyahu — even in separate interviews — Netanyahu was simply excluded. He never got equal time and when he was finally interviewed, it was with unbecoming animosity and attempts to belittle him and nearly each of his replies was cut off by repeated carping comments."

Crown Prince calls for methodology for understanding

(Continued from page 12)

and economic forces that are at play in society.

Prof. Vassilopoulos said Christianity's contribution to the Western educational system is not only feasible but also imperative since it refers to crucial domains of the art of teaching.

And since the modern educational system of the Christian countries is trapped within a secularised notion of education, said Prof. Vassilopoulos, its principle characteristics should be re-examined on the basis of Christian anthropology as a fixed, timeless common denominator.

Other aspects of the educational system were tackled on the first day of the meeting, when four speakers presented papers on the problems and philosophy of education.

Abraham Ajlouni from the Royal Academy spoke on the "Philosophy of Education in Islam," and Grigoriou Ziakas, professor at Aristotelian University of Thessalonique in Greece, presented a paper on the "Philosophy of Education in Christianity."

On the "Problems of Education in Modern Society," George Dragas, dean of Holy Cross at the Greek

Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, the U.S., and Abdul Rahman 'Adas, professor of education at the University of Jordan, presented different papers from the Muslim and Christian perspectives.

His all holiness, the ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I had stressed the importance of the meeting saying the interfaith dialogue between Orthodox and Islam has special significance as different issues are tackled by distinguished spiritual personalities.

In a message which he sent to the director/president of the Orthodox Centre of Ecumenical Patriarchate, Damaskinos Papandreou, and read at the meeting, he said: "The relation of religion to the objectives of the peoples' education is essential and functional, and in every case expressed through the quality of the educational system adopted in each place."

He added that addressing the relation between education and the educational process under the spirit of the common values of religion should contribute to the achievement of constructive collaboration in light of the common problems facing people regardless of religious, racial and social distinctions.

In an address to the meeting Sunday, Metropolitan Damaskinos Papandreou said "the course of this dialogue bears the stamp of the unswayable enthusiasm and prophetic realism of its inspirers, who created the preconditions for it and circumvented anticipated or unforeseen difficulties in the promotion of its holy aims."

He stressed the necessity of the interfaith dialogue between Orthodox and Islam, describing the issue of utilising education as an issue that is "significant and critical in our times," and adding that it also "promotes a spirit of mutual understanding and sincere collaboration between the two faiths."

Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland added that the Muslim-Christian meeting should emphasise a manner to realise a code of common values with respect to God, humankind and the world.

He said the dialogue between Christianity and Islam was a "dialogue of hope not only for the peaceful coexistence of nations but also for the restoration of contemporary man's spiritual equilibrium, who emerges utterly exhausted from the tempest of political, ideological, spiritual and social confusion of our era."

He said there was a need for closer collaboration between religion and education in order to avoid confusion and "uncontrolled tensions" within the society.

In reply to Metropolitan Damaskinos' address, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of inter-faith dialogue and its significance for the present and the future in terms of leading to positive action for the benefit of all believers.

"We are not speaking essentially of inter-faith dialogue that is dialogue between the faiths," said Prince Hassan, "but we are speaking essentially of dialogue of believers in these faiths. In that sense, it is a dialogue with a human content, with a human face, with a human responsibility for the here and now and to the tomorrow which we can influence through positive action and through our shared fear and love for God."

The Muslim-Christian encounter on "The Educational System in Islam and Christianity," will end today (Wednesday) with the issuing of recommendations and a summary of the debate which took place among the participants who included leading specialists and personalities from different countries.

Another trilateral said planned

(Continued from page 1)

Jerusalem, or a return of the Golan to Syria.

Amid fears for the future of the peace process, Mr. Mubarak met with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Cairo on Monday and both called on Arabs to put up a united front in the face of the Mr. Netanyahu's incoming government.

After talks here with Mr. Musa and Mr. Sharara, Prince Sand told reporters that their meeting had resulted "in precise recommendations on conditions required for joint Arab action to be submitted to the leaders of the three countries."

"These recommendations

contain good ideas. I can't say more before they are submitted to the leaders," Prince Sand said, as the two visiting foreign ministers left after a whirlwind trip.

It was uncertain exactly which Saudi leader would attend the summit in Riyadh, as King Fahd is still recovering from the effects of a stroke in November.

King Fahd met with Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Assad at their first summit in Alexandria, Egypt, in December 1994, after Syria was irritated at moves by Qatar and Oman toward normalising ties with Israel.

Ariane-5 explodes on first flight

(Continued from page 1)

built in Europe — was seen to suddenly flip over in the sky, then explode in flames. A spokesman for the CNES authorities said the decision to explode the rocket had been taken to minimise risk. He confirmed that there were no reported injuries, and said ground staff had remained in protected areas at all times.

"It's a sad event for everyone," said Belgian Science Minister Yvan Ilieff,

one of the shocked guests at the launch site.

"It's disappointing. There will be consequences which we must not shy away from. It's not a question of a lack of courage or of giving up."

The United States space agency voiced regret at the failure. "We are very saddened by that," said Donald Savage, a spokesman for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). "We are confident that the European Space Agency will determine the causes."

Bahrain holds 44 coup plotters

(Continued from page 1)

sion Wednesday, according to newspapers.

Bahrain's foreign minister informed the five permanent member countries of the U.N. Security Council of the alleged plot.

Sheikh Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifa gave the ambassadors of the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China, as well as those of Arab states and allies, a message from the Bahraini emir about the plot.

Sheikh Mohammad informed the diplomats of the "results of the interrogations of the suspects, their confessions on belonging to Hizbollah-Bahrain and their

links to Iran which supports, finances and trains these elements in Revolutionary Guard camps in Iran," GNA said.

The Arab League urged Iran to stay out of Bahrain's internal affairs.

"We hope Iran will stop provoking tension in the region, will deal with Arab countries and especially its neighbours on the basis of friendship rather than animosity and halt all interference in Bahrain's internal affairs," league chief Esmat Abdul Meguid told reporters.

He said the pan-Arab organisation supported all measures taken by Bahrain's government to ensure security and stability in the country.

Cabinet ends debate on law

(Continued from page 1)

isolation. The JPA cancelled the sit-in after the meeting with Mr. Kabarti.

But Dr. Mnasher said Tuesday that the "government has always reached out for the JPA to listen to its views" on the draft law.

The JPA is opposed to the definition of the "journalist" in the draft law saying that it would open the door wide for non-journalists to join the association, whose membership has been strictly con-

trolled, leaving many established journalists outside the association.

Another objection by the JPA to the draft legislation is an article that would make the membership in the association non-binding to journalists, which would set precedent among professional associations.

A number of journalists had called on their journalists to sign a petition to protest the draft law, but it was not clear how many of the association's 360 members will heed the call.

IFOR says no change

(Continued from page 12)

in protest of the links to Mr. Karadzic.

NATO spokesmen previously announced that the more than 50,000 foreign troops in Bosnia would begin spreading but through the territory from the demilitarised zones they patrolled along former frontlines of the 43-month Bosnian war.

Maj. Haselock said that by spreading out, the troops would have a more visible presence but that no changes in how they conducted their mission had been ordered.

"We're not going to mount a specific operation" to go after Mr. Karadzic, Maj. Haselock said.

"What they're talking about is nothing new," he said. The main task of NATO forces remained to clear and repair roads and bridges and remove illegal checkpoints set up by police.

Maj. Haselock also said NATO forces would continue to avoid confrontations with mobs that have blocked free movement in some parts of the country, particularly in Bosnian Serb territory.

"We'll make sure we're close so we can intervene in case there is a threat to people's lives," he said. But NATO troops will keep away from crowd control duties, leaving that to civilian police as was called for by the Dayton agreement, he said.

Free movement is considered crucial to holding successful elections mandated by the Bosnian peace agreement. While Mr. Christopher and other Western leaders want the vote to proceed as planned, probably around September, many local people fear the lack of free movement, intimidation and other problems will prevent any chance of fair elections.

Serbs demonstrate

Thousands of people demonstrated in eastern Bosnia Tuesday in support of Mr. Karadzic and Gen. Mladic, whom the international community is trying to remove from power.

About 5,000 people demonstrated in the Serb-controlled town of Foca, where a Bosnian Serb official said no one had the right to stop Mr. Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb president, and Gen. Mladic, from staying in power if this was what the Serbs wanted, "the attacks on President Karadzic... and Gen. Mladic are attacks against the Serb people," Bozidar Vucurovic, the mayor of Trebinje in southern Bosnia, said.

A former soldier addressed the crowd, which was chanting "Ratko, we're with you" and "Radovan, we won't abandon you."

Netanyahu moderates rhetoric

(Continued from page 1)

"Benjamin Netanyahu is forming the government," he said. "If he has proposals, he will make them."

No Likud legislator has publicly broached the prospect of national unity, although Israeli media reports say that those close to Mr. Netanyahu prefer it.

Certainly, they have been hinting at a backdown from key headline planks in the Likud platform in favour of approaches that would not so readily alienate the Palestinians at a critical juncture in the peace process.

Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Ehud Olmert, said that Mr. Netanyahu would not necessarily shut down the Orient House, the Jerusalem headquarters of the Palestinian leadership, as long as the Palestinians did not use the building on behalf of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

That was a step back from Mr. Netanyahu's oft-stated

promise to shut down the building — a move that Palestinians said could spark violence.

And Moshe Katsav, a senior legislator, said Monday that the new government plans to remove most forces from the tense West Bank city of Hebron. Mr. Netanyahu had promised to keep Israeli troops in Hebron for at least three years, contradicting Mr. Peres' commitment to withdraw in coming weeks.

Likud officials suggested that the sharp lines of the campaign were more rhetoric than substance.

Zalman Shoval, a senior Netanyahu adviser and his likely choice for ambassador to the United States, said that the advantage of the Likud win lay less in policy changes and more in the party's ability to carry the electorate through a painful peace process.

"Whatever compromise

(Netanyahu) might make, he will be supported by the vast majority of the people in Israel," Mr. Shoval said in an interview.

Some Labour leaders were not optimistic about a national unity government, saying the party could back any peace moves in the opposition and still retain its integrity.

And Likud spokesman underscored that substantive differences remain.

While Labour had lifted all its objections to the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state, the Likud still insisted on an Israeli presence in the West Bank. Likud strategist Doron Gold told the Yediot Achronot daily.

And on Syria, Mr. Gold said the incoming government was likely to keep away from negotiations until the Syrians contained guerrilla activity in South Lebanon.

No Palestinian state — Likud aide

(Continued from page 12)

in 1948 and the Jewish settlements.

On the refugees, Mr. Gold said Israel did not want to see the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) flooding the West Bank with refugees, further "compromising Israeli security."

And, he added, the settlements were also "important to the security of Israel."

Likud studies 'new approach'

(Continued from page 1)

process to operate from Syrian territory.

"We should not be in a position where our negotiating partners are, on the one hand, talking with us and, on the other, using proxy terrorists," said Mr. Gold.

During the campaign, Mr. Netanyahu said the Heights

Aqaba hosts summit today

(Continued from page 1)

ministers of trade, Saudi Trade Minister Osama Al Faqih will attend the June 12 meeting in Amman, the first such encounter since the Gulf crisis of 1991.

The information minister expressed hope that the meeting would lead to the restoration of Jordanian-Saudi relations to the level that existed before the Gulf crisis.

The Aqaba summit has assumed greater importance in terms of Arab coordination following the election of right-wing Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister of Israel in last week's elections.

In his pre-election pronouncements, Mr. Netanyahu outlined a hardline approach to the peace process and the conditions and had set would follow were seen as posing serious obstacles to a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Upper House Speaker Ahmad Lawzi said the meeting at Aqaba was a signal of Jordan's endeavours towards coordinating efforts to address Arab issues.

Mr. Lawzi, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, added that the three leaders would try to strengthen Arab solidarity and steadfastness in their drive to reach a just durable and lasting peace in the region based on United Nations Security Council resolutions.

According to Egyptian officials, Arab countries are seeking a united stance in a bid to force Mr. Netanyahu to abandon his hardline positions on the peace process.

"The various inter-Arab meetings which Egypt has initiated are a clear message to Netanyahu: The Arabs won't sit quietly if he maintains a stance which threatens to paralyse the peace process," an Egyptian foreign ministry official told AFP.

President Mubarak and Mr. Assad met in Cairo on Monday. Both leaders expressed pessimism about the peace process.

Mr. Assad called for Arab unity, underlining that "we must support each other strongly because the cause of one of our Arab brothers is all our cause."

"The summit (in Saudi Arabia) is to attempt to draw up a common Arab position towards the peace process and will mark a starting point for a larger Arab summit," an Arab official in Riyadh said.

Netanyahu challenged

(Continued from page 12)

Peres' Labour Party told the Associated Press he was approached by some of the lawyers on election night, when it became clear that Mr. Peres had lost.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he rejected out of hand their proposal to challenge the result. However, if the lawyers wanted to petition the supreme court on their own account, he "could not stop them," the Labour official said.

Mr. Gold further stressed "whoever thinks that the new government will make any concession with respect to the sovereignty of Jerusalem can forget about it."

Asked about the redeployment of Israeli military forces from the West Bank town of Hebron, Mr. Gold merely said it "will be up to the next government to decide."

At another point, however, Mr. Netanyahu hinted that some territorial compromise was possible. "You begin by demanding all the Golan, and that is exactly our position."

Expert commends Jordan's energy strategy, analyses requirements and potential

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — For countries in transition affected by lack of energy resources such as Jordan, the recipe recommended by the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is "to go to the market."

"Cooperative energy relations or, even better, competitive energy trade relationships are the best for maximising the efficiency of the market," Foreign Service officer and international economist at the U.S. mission to the OECD in Paris, Wayne Neill, told the Jordan Times.

Commenting on an agreement Jordan recently signed with the U.S. energy giant Enron Corp to build a plant to use Qatari gas to generate electricity for Israel and Jordan by the year 2000, Mr. Neill said the government was moving in the right direction, as "oil is dirty and not cost-effective for electricity generation, while gas is clean and cost-efficient."

"Fossil fuel, such as crude oil in all its forms, coal and natural gas, is going to remain the king in electricity generation worldwide, but for Jordan,

coal-based utilities would be a disaster because of lack of coal in the region and unaffordable transportation costs," he added.

Besides, "crude oil is too expensive and, even if it could be subsidised, or even partially subsidised, it is never going to be cost-effective," and consequent political costs would have to be paid.

"Energy Minister Hashem Dabbas announced last March the signing of a letter of intent with Enron, according to which a \$300 million gasification plant in the Red Sea port of Aqaba will handle up to 2.5 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas to serve Israel, Jordan and possibly the Palestinian self-rule areas."

The agreement, embodying Israel and Jordan's intention to switch from oil to gas for industry, will help Jordan increase the percentage of energy demand covered by gas utilities, which currently accounts for 15-18 per cent.

International observers are very optimistic and "pleased by the signs that the Jordanian government is looking to the market, to new sources and to new technology as well," Mr. Neill said.

"Nothing is more efficient from a financial standpoint than a gas-based electricity generation, as the technology is very well known and the capacity (of the plant) can be expanded very easily," Mr. Neill explained.

"A turbine-based gas utility is really the best option here. It takes 30 seconds to switch the plant on or off, as opposed to an oil or coal based utility, which need one or two days to gear up before they can be turned on," the economist said.

Talking about other sources, Mr. Neill said that "nuclear energy is not even an option for Jordan, because it would not be economic and the political costs would be very high."

He pointed out that "solar energy as a complement to residential heating is probably the best that Jordan could do while also maintaining a gasoline-based economy."

The National Petroleum Company recently expressed the intention to negotiate with U.S. companies willing to invest in Jordan's downstream facilities, namely the reserves in the Rish field near the Iraqi border.

"Boosting imports of

natural gas is a good option for Jordan, as I do not think Jordan is able to generate its own gas," Mr. Neill said.

Furthermore, "the experience within the OECD shows that those countries which followed an autarky approach and tried to produce energy have all failed, and the most evident example in this regard is the U.S."

"There are a lot of good sources from which to import natural gas to the area. Large quantities could be exported from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and Jordan, in need of additional megawatts capacity, could absorb the quantities that Japan and Korea cannot absorb any longer," the economist indicated.

Mr. Neill said that "the creation of the International Energy Agency in 1974 was a recognition that autarky cannot work and that countries have to cooperate with each other."

Pointing to "political rapprochement and symbolic relationships between commercial development on one hand and support for the political developments on the other" as a means to "maximise market efficiency," Mr. Neill said that "competitively and cooperatively-based trade can help build mutual trust and can have positive effects on all sectors of an economy, namely tourism and transport."

To "move more towards the market," the Jordanian government should "encourage international trade by eliminating barriers and reducing customs."

According to Mr. Neill, technology developments in oil exploitation work is in Jordan's favour.

"The deposits and reservoirs that once were not recoverable are now recoverable, be asserted. Now, for example, drilling through a single platform or a single well it is possible to tap a

number of different deposits at different strata, and certainly certain deposits in Jordan which are not currently considered to be economic will become so," Mr. Neill said, citing countries such as Equatorial Guinea, which "were made very attractive by the recent developments in technology."

"We have also seen a two-thirds increase in oil production in non-OPEC countries over the last decade and a half driven by the improvements in technology and not by raising prices which are remaining relatively stable in real terms. Even crude oil now, in real terms, is about as cheap as it was before the early seventies' oil embargo," Mr. Neill explained.

Talking about the eventual return of Iraq, Mr. Neill told the Jordan Times that studies carried on by the International Energy Agency (IEA) suggest that the increase in consumption and demand will be of such a scale that it can easily absorb the great quantities of oil that Iraq has to offer.

According to Mr. Neill, Iraq's potential production of one million barrels a day on top of the previous three — "and the Iraqis could easily increase their oil production up to five million barrels a day within a few years," he said — the market is ready to absorb easily the Iraqi production, with prices remaining in a \$15-\$25 band, especially considering the pace at which oil consumption in South Asia is proceeding.

"Jordan could greatly benefit from the opening up of Iraq because of its geographic location," Mr. Neill concluded. "It would find itself in a similar position as the Czech Republic or Hungary in Europe, if Middle Eastern countries succeed in eliminating both economic and psychological barriers."

France's Juppe pledges overhaul of tax system

PARIS (R) — French Prime Minister Alain Juppe has

promised a major reform of the tax system over five years, which would lower all income tax rates and shift the cost of paying for healthcare off wages and onto savings.

Mr. Juppe, under pressure to deliver some good news after touting austerity in his first year of office, said that the French economy was now on the right road, with economic growth rebounding and unemployment starting to edge down.

"We are going to move to a new phase in our policies, that of tax cuts," he told a news conference.

But Mr. Juppe said the tax reforms would have to go hand in hand with deep cuts in public spending, required to reduce France's public deficit to preparation for European monetary union.

"There can be no real reform of taxes without a reduction in taxes, and there can be no reduction in taxes without a reduction in public spending," he said.

He gave few details of his plans, due to be presented in full in September, but said all

income tax rates would be lowered over the next five years.

Payroll taxes used to pay for the country's generous healthcare system would be lowered and the cost shifted onto income from savings, he said. He cited life assurance policies as one area which could be targeted.

He also pledged to reform the "taxe professionnelle," a local business tax, to stop this acting as a brake on investment.

But he declined to give any amount for his tax cutting plans, dismissed by the opposition Socialists and Communists as electioneering ahead of a 1998 general election.

The Socialists said the plan was unfair and would favour higher wages. They accused Mr. Juppe of having raised taxes last year only to promise to start cutting them by the election.

The proposals contained little that was different from those already floated by Mr. Juppe's office last year.

But the announcement appeared to be aimed at heading off critics.

Investors see foreign funds flowing to Jordan despite Likud win

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Foreign fund investment in the Jordanian stock exchange is expected to grow by year-end despite a wait-and-see mood caused by the Likud victory in Israel which has raised fears of a setback to Middle East peace, investment analysts said Tuesday.

Investment managers say the impact on the Amman exchange has been less direct than on Israel's Tel Aviv financial market.

The Amman Finance Market (AFM) has shed only one per cent since Likud's win last Wednesday, compared with Tel Aviv's five per cent nose-dive on Thursday.

The immediate impact will be felt much more in Tel Aviv than at the AFM because Israel has had an investment boom while the

Amman market has bottomed down," said Omar Masri, managing director of Atlas Investment Group, a leading firm involved with emerging funds in the region.

Investment managers say Amman's stock market was buttressed because Israel, not Jordan, had been the major receiver of the so-called "peace dividend" with record flows from overseas investors to its markets. Jordan has had minimal foreign buying in its exchange, not exceeding \$12 million so far in 1996.

The AFM, a barometer of investor interest, in fact shrugged off Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel. Many businessmen have since complained that apart from a flood of tourists, the economy has benefited only marginally from the treaty.

Mr. Masri believes a market upturn would be more likely to follow an easing of

the high interest rate policy intended to bolster the dinar but blamed by investors for diverting funds to higher yielding deposits.

Mr. Masri and other fund managers forecast a full in foreign investment for at least three to six months until easing of "exacerbated investor apprehension" — fears that a Likud-led government would destroy chances of Middle East peace by stalling the Syrian and Palestinian tracks.

This, however, should not affect an anticipated \$150-\$200 million in foreign buying by end-1996 by at least five Middle East emerging market funds, already with committed investors.

Analysts say the market will continue to mark time until Likud's policies clarify.

(Continued on page 9)

THE Daily Crossword by Stanley B. Whitten

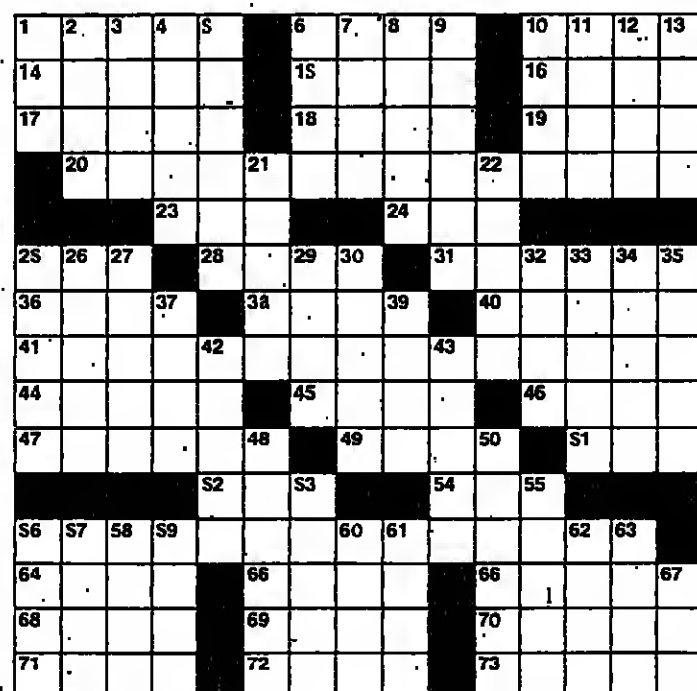
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1 Spinel variety
6 Scottish lake
10 Period of prosperity
14 Wide awake
15 "— want for Christmas..."
16 Samms or Thompson
17 Large yacht jib
18 Light gas
19 Reclined
20 Debutante's ball
23 At least one
24 Susan of "LA Law"

25 Auditor, perhaps
28 Traffic sign
31 Male ducks
36 Earthen pot
38 Type of exam
40 School, in Paris
41 Houston/Bassett film

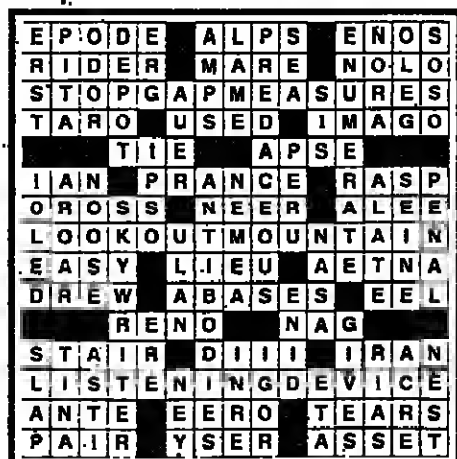
44 Bedsheets, e.g.
45 Broker's word
46 Type of school abbr.

47 High-spirited horses
49 Castigate
51 Response: abbr.
52 Caviar source
54 Pluto
56 Judd Hirsch film
64 Peruvian of old
65 Money premium
66 Greek epic
68 Slant
69 Zesty taste
70 Having a thin sound
71 RBL, e.g.
72 Seagoing vessels
73 Contest wager

DOWN
1 Pouch
2 Guinness
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4 Fragrance
5 Blots
6 Auld — syne
7 Bread spread
8 Obscure



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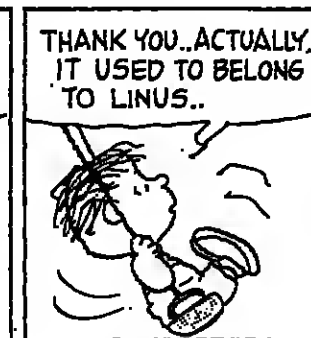


35 Appears
37 Suit lo —
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42 Short-tailed lemur
43 Pass over
48 Music piece
50 Boundaries
53 Samanlha of films
55 Bowler's challenge
56 Menu item
57 Group
58 Sports org.
59 Cartoonist of note
60 Pig sound
61 Winter drinks
62 Turner of song
63 Pull
67 Tini

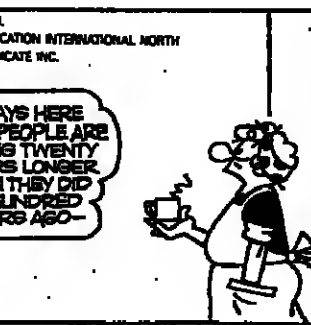
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen.



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff

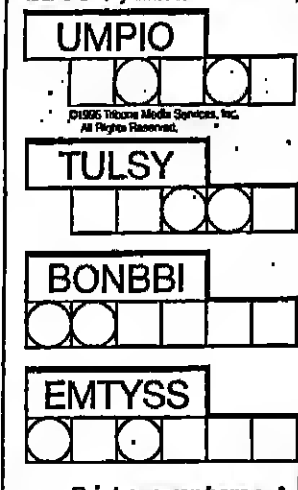


Only Life
Is
More Colorful
D A JANI
Diamonds Jewelry

Amra Forum Hotel Shops, 6th Circle

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

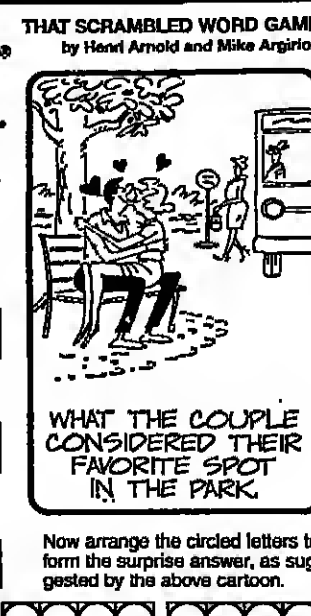
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: PARTY BALMY DURESS DEFILE

Answer: A wedding party would not be complete without one of these — A BRIDE'S MATE



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR
WEDNESDAY JUNE 5, 1996
By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Make your home more attractive and operative during the day today, however don't invite guests in yet for later this evening you will have every detail worked out so that those who are in your home will feel very comfortable.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get in touch with relatives who can assist you in some manner today, however later tonight steer clear of a grumbling friend who has a chip on his or her shoulder and wants to unload their difficulties upon you.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Find better ways of increasing your abundance today, however try to save a bit more. Make necessary repairs to your property at this time and you could avoid potential difficulties in the days ahead which could be costly.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) An upturn is possible this morning. Don't permit another to hurt your feelings with thoughtless words which are useless to your career activities and could be a detriment to your success and prosperity.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Start that campaign of activity today you have planned and a quick upturn results from your efforts, however later this evening don't take on any added responsibilities or you could find yourself burning the candle at both ends.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find the best way of gaining personal aims today, and then study how others get good results and achieve success. Later tonight you can spend this time with your loved ones at home with some fun activities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Get into public affairs today which are important and handle them with efficiency. Don't irk others in any manner or you could find yourself up a creek without a paddle and trying to succeed on a useless cause.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Try a new method of operation today for gaining your hopes and wishes and make big headway toward such ends and you can be quite successful in the eyes of those in authority who have your career in their hands.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Show that you are truly trustworthy with your mate today and gain more affection. Handle business matters in the morning in an efficient manner and you will gain the success which you so richly deserve.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be honest in starting how you are handling your part of deals today, however be gentle with sensitive persons and do not make any unkind comments which you make at this time.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Handle every phase of your endeavours in instead of concentrating on just one. You are very convincing today concerning any career activities which you are pursuing at this time with great success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This morning is fine for making appointments which are pleasing to you and your friends. Practice your talents so that they will be of help to you when you need them and by getting the recognition of those in authority in great.

Birthstone of June: Emerald — Citrine

Likud victory dissuades Jordanian businessmen from investment in West Bank, Gaza

By Mervat Suwaidh
Special to The Jordan Times

AMMAN — The victory of Israeli right-wing Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, has sown uncertainty among Jordanian businessmen planning to invest in the Palestinian self-rule areas and prompted others to suspend projects they had already started there, investors and economists said Tuesday.

Most of the businessmen interviewed by the Jordan Times perceived Mr. Netanyahu's victory as a setback to the peace process and that it will eventually lead to the deterioration of the investment climate in the autonomous areas which is still dominated by Israel.

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DAILY BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Analysts expect slowdown of investment flow to region

★ JORDANIAN ECONOMIC analysts expect the flow of foreign investment to retreat to the region in general and to Israel in particular over the possibility of a setback to the peace process after the election of Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister of Israel. They noted that Mr. Netanyahu's pledge to cut the budget deficit by curbing spending, would limit the activities of foreign investors in Israel. Basel Jaradneh, general manager of the Jordan Investment and Finance Bank and former minister of finance, said that the Likud victory has placed big question marks over the peace process and that investors were concerned about the continuity of the peace process. He emphasized that if the Likud's position towards the peace process was not clarified, a slowdown in foreign investment flow to the region will result and that Israel's losses in particular will be even greater than just the stoppage of the investment flow.

Arab Bank Executive Director Mufleh Aqel agreed with Mr. Jaradneh's assessment and noted that the Likud victory had created negative opinion about the investment climate in Israel. He said the investors had become concerned about the investment process and the possibility of a setback to the peace process. Mr. Aqel said that investments had boomed in Israel with the peace process over the past four years and that the Jewish state was able to attract investments during the past two years more than it could over many decades. The banker saw Mr. Netanyahu's policies limiting the activity of foreign investors. Such policies have led international investment parties to reconsider investing in Israel, said Mr. Aqel, who expected a freeze on the flow of investments to the region and, especially to Israel, until the Likud's vision to the peace process becomes clearer.

Wasef Azar, general manager of the Business Bank, said a retreat in investment flows to the region and to Israel cannot be ruled out as a result of investors' fears over the peace process. He noted that capital movements follow stable and secure investment climate (Al Aswaq).

HUDD completes preparing scheme for housing to civil servants

★ THE HOUSING and Urban Development Department (HUDD) has finalized drafting a scheme for a provident fund to help government employees obtain housing. According to the scheme which will shortly be submitted to the Cabinet, the government will help civil servants to obtain soft loans from the provident fund in which both the employee and the government institution employing him/her are participating. The loan will enable the employee buy a housing unit from HUDD or the private sector.

HUDD Director-General Yousef Hiyasat expected the number of borrowers to exceed 4,000 every year with each loan ranging between JD 10,000 to JD 30,000 according to the salary of the employee (Al Ra'i).

Financial Markets

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.7080 | 0.7100 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.0281 | 1.0306 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4625 | 0.4648 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.5639 | 0.5667 |
| French Franc | 0.1366 | 0.1373 |
| Japanese Yen* | 0.00523 | 0.00556 |
| Italian Lira* | 0.0458 | 0.0460 |
| Belgian Franc | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |

* Per 100

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 4/6/1996

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.7080 | 0.7100 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.0281 | 1.0306 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4625 | 0.4648 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.5639 | 0.5667 |
| French Franc | 0.1366 | 0.1373 |
| Japanese Yen* | 0.00523 | 0.00556 |
| Italian Lira* | 0.0458 | 0.0460 |
| Belgian Franc | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |

* Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 4/6/1996

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Saudi Riyal | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Qatari Riyal | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Omani Riyal | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| UAE Dirham | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Greek Drachma* | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Cypriot Pound | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |

* Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday:

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| One U.S. dollar | 1.3682/92 | Canadian dollar | 1.5283/93 |
| | 1.5283/93 | Deutsche marks | 1.7126/36 |
| | 1.7126/36 | Dutch guilders | 1.2550/60 |
| | 1.2550/60 | Swiss francs | 31.444/8 |
| | 31.444/8 | Belgian francs | 5.1794/44 |
| | 5.1794/44 | French francs | 1543.3/4.8 |
| | 1543.3/4.8 | Italian lire | 108.80/90 |
| | 108.80/90 | Japanese yen | 6.6810/10 |
| | 6.6810/10 | Swedish crowns | 6.5290/40 |
| | 6.5290/40 | Norwegian crowns | 5.8997/47 |
| | 5.8997/47 | Danish crowns | 1.4078/88 |
| | 1.4078/88 | Singapore dollars | 0.7988/93 |
| | 0.7988/93 | Australian dollars | 7.7365/75 |
| | 7.7365/75 | Hong Kong dollars | |

One Sterling Gold (ounce) \$1.5512/22 | | \$389.70/90.20 |

DAJANI JEWELLERS

Gems of the world . All birthstones in 18 & 21 K gold . Unique designs . Amra Hotel Shops 6th circle, Amman

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Graf in semis as Sampras downs Courier; Seles out

PARIS (AFP) — Defending champion Steffi Graf raced into the semifinals of the women's singles at the French Open tennis championships here Tuesday when she scored a ruthless 6-3, 6-1 victory in just 52 minutes over fifth-seed Iva Majoli of Croatia.

The 26-year-old German, bidding to win the event for a fifth time, now plays either third-seed Conchita Martinez of Spain or ninth-seed Lindsay Davenport of the United States.

Graf's victory on the new Suzanne Lenglen showcourt followed the shock defeat of arch-rival and joint top seed Monica Seles who was beaten 6-7 (7/9), 3-6 by tenth-seed Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic.

Top-seed Pete Sampras came back after trailing by two sets to love to reach the semifinals of the men's singles when he beat fellow-American and twice former champion Jim Courier 5-7, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 in just over three and a half hours.

Sampras, bidding for the only Grand Slam title he has never won, now plays sixth-seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia for a place in Sunday's final.

Kafelnikov earlier beat Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-4, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2 in the day's other quarter-final.

In today's clash Sampras hit 27 aces and Courier 29. Earlier Spain's battling Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario became the first player to reach the semifinals of the women's singles when she finally scored a 6-2, 6-7 (4/7), 10-8 victory over unseeded Karina Hahsdoova of Slovakia after a grueling three-hour showdown.

She now faces Jana Novotna for a place in Saturday's final.

Meanwhile, sixth-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov stormed confidently into the semifinals and promised that whether he faced top-seed Pete Sampras or former champion Jim Courier — he intended to better his performance of twelve months ago.

The 22-year-old 6ft 3in (1m90) Russian Davis Cup player, who beat big-serving Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-4, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, wants to erase the memory of last year when he won only eight games in the semifinal against eventual champion Thomas Muster.

"This year it is a very different story," he grinned. "I don't care who I play next — Sampras or Courier — just so long as I play better than I did last year."

"This year I am much more confident. I have been playing well on clay and got some good results this season. And here at Roland Garros I have won five matches and lost only one set. So I feel my game is at



Switzerland's Marc Rosset a good level.

"But it is not as easy as it may look out there and, to be honest, I'm a little bit tired today."

Edberg bows out

Stefan Edberg was given a standing ovation as he bowed out of the French Open for a last time Monday — fighting all the way as he was beaten 6-7 (4/7), 3-6, 3-6 in just over two hours by Switzerland's Olympic champion Marc Rosset in the fourth-round of the men's singles.

Rosset, the 14th seed, who had never got past the second-round in six previous visits to the championships, now plays Bernd Karbacher of Germany for a place in Friday's semifinals.

The unseeded 56th-ranked Karbacher, earlier chalked up a shock 6-3, 6-1, 6-2 victory over fifth-seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia.

Edberg, 30, who has announced he is to retire at the end of the season, broke Rosset's opening service game and led 3-1 in the opening set before slowly losing control in the stamina-sapping sunshine on the new Suzanne Lenglen Showcourt.

The 25-year-old Rosset, who was out of tennis with a hand injury early in the season after punching an advertising billboard in rage while playing in Australia, had not shown convincing form after returning to clay in the build-up for Roland Garros.

Beaten at the first hurdle at Barcelona, Monte Carlo and Prague — the 6ft 7in (2m01) Swiss player won only one match in Hamburg and two matches at the Italian Open.

But against Edberg he looked devastating. Edberg, who has won every major title in the game except the French

Open title, had played three superb matches before facing Rosset — a player he had beaten in all three previous meetings.

The former world number-one opened his 13th and final Roland Garros campaign by defeating Morocco's Karim Alami and then scored an upset win over Spanish clay-court specialist Carlos Moya.

To everyone's surprise he then put out fourth-seeded 1989 champion Michael Chang.

A "top-ten" player for ten consecutive years, Edberg recently slipped to 45th in the rankings.

Edberg, the ideal role model for younger players with his impeccable court manners and superbly classical "serve-and-volley" style of tennis, has won six Grand Slam singles titles — triumphing at the Australian Open in 1985 and 1987, Wimbledon in 1988 and 1990, and at the United States Open in 1991 and 1992 — during a career launched after becoming the first player ever to win the junior "grand slam" in 1983.

"I hardly slept last night thinking about this match," said Rosset after his win.

"He is still a super champion and it was normal that the crowd were behind him. He has been playing really well here and I knew it was going to be a tough match for me today."

"At the end I just wanted to leave the court as fast as possible and leave Stefan with the crowd."

"He is going to be sadly missed," said Rosset.

Looking forward to his match against Karbacher, the Swiss player admitted: "I expected Goran to beat him — but if he has got this far in the tournament then he must be playing well."

Wang Junxia placed in sporting quarantine

BEIJING (AFP) — Wang Junxia, one of China's best hopes for Olympic glory, faces too much pressure to succeed on the Atlanta athletics track, according to her coach.

"All of China is waiting for her to be crowned in Atlanta and this is not the best way to train," Mao Dezhen said Tuesday as he announced she was being cut off from the rest of the sporting world ahead of the Games.

The coach told the sports daily that Wang, the world 10,000 metre world record holder and a fugitive from the now devastated Ma Junren Camp, needs more peace to prepare for her first Olympic Games in the United States next month.

Wang teamed up with Mao last year after leading a split of top runners from Ma's legendary "family army" with whom she sprang to fame.

"I will do everything to make sure nothing upsets her preparation," Mao said. He has turned down several requests for interviews with Wang.

Last month, Wang set the world's fastest times of the year over 5,000m (14min 51.87sec) and 10,000m (31:1.76) at the national championships in Nanjing.

"Her training performances have been encouraging," said Mao. The Chinese athletes have now moved to a secret training camp, thought to be at high altitude. They will return to Beijing and then go to the United States in early July.

"We must not place too much importance on the Nanjing Times because they were in Nanjing, which is a familiar environment. In Atlanta everything will be completely different," said Mao, who said he was now concentrating on his protégée's "psychological preparation" for the Games.

Bookmakers odds for Euro 96

LONDON (R) — Germany remain 4-1 favourites to win this month's European Soccer Championship and their striker Juergen Klinsmann is favourite to be top scorer, British bookmakers Ladbrokes said Monday.

Klinsmann is quoted as 9-2, despite being suspended for the Germans' opening match against the Czech Republic Sunday.

The odds on England winning the championship, which begins at Wembley Saturday, have been lengthened following their recent tour of China and Hong Kong.

The odds quoted by Ladbrokes are as follows:

* Winning country:
4-1 Germany, 5-1 Italy, 11-2 Netherlands, 6-1 France, 7-1 England, 8-1 Spain, 10-1 Portugal, 12-1 Croatia, 16-1 Russia, 25-1 Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark, 50-1 Switzerland, 66-1 Czech Republic, 80-1 Scotland, 100-1 Turkey

* Top scorer: 9-2 Juergen Klinsmann (Germany) 5-1 Patrick Kluivert (Netherlands) 8-1 Fabrizio Ravanelli (Italy) 10-1 Dennis Bergkamp (Netherlands), Davor Suker (Croatia).

Eight Euro 96 cities gear up for fans

LONDON (R) — Eight cities are preparing for an influx of 250,000 soccer fans for Euro 96, the biggest sporting event to be held in England since the 1966 World Cup.

Seven English Premier League club stadia and London's Wembley Stadium will host the 31 European Championship matches from June 8 to 30.

Wembley, where England beat Germany in the 1966 World Cup final, will be the venue for England matches against Switzerland, Scotland and the Netherlands plus a quarter-final, a semifinal and the final.

Birmingham, England's second largest city with a population of more than one million, lies in the West Midlands and is home to Premier League team Aston Villa and Birmingham of the first division.

Villa Park, home of Aston Villa, will host three first round matches, involving Netherlands, Scotland and Switzerland, and one quarter-final.

Birmingham, an industrial city, known for car building, will be laying on music and street entertainment during the championships.

Leeds, which lies in West Yorkshire at the "crossroads of Britain," will be hosting matches involving France, Spain, Bulgaria and Romania at Elland Road, home of Premier League Leeds United.

Home to 700,000, Leeds is trying to shed its image as a grey, industrial city with an urban regeneration programme, which embraces 24-hour pavement cafe culture.

Leeds has set up a fan camp with huge marquees for backpacking supporters to sleep in and has opened an exhibition called "more than a game", a celebration of soccer culture from the fan's perspective.

Liverpool, birthplace of the Beatles and famed for its seaport, is home to rival English Premier League teams Liverpool and Everton. The city, in the north-west of England, has a population of 450,000, nicknamed "scousers".

Anfield, home of Liverpool, will host matches involving Italy, Russia and the Czech Republic and one quarter-final.

Euro '96 celebrations will include a lord mayor's parade, a river festival on the Mersey, street entertainment, comedy, concerts and a festival in Stanley Park near the Anfield ground.

Manchester, the world's first industrial city, is home to pop groups simply red, take that and oasis. Manchester United won the Premier League and F.A. Cup, their second double, but neighbours Manchester City were relegated to the first division.

The city, with a population of 500,000 manucians, will be hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2002.

Old Trafford, home of Manchester United, will host games involving Russia, Germany, Czech Republic and Italy and will also hold one quarter-final and a semifinal.

Manchester's night clubs such as "the hacienda" are laying on themed events for euro 96 and the pubs, clubs and restaurants in the city have been granted a special licence to stay open later than usual.

Newcastle, once famous for shipbuilding and coalmining, is now listed as one of the world's top 10 "party" cities.

The population of 300,000 are called "geordies" after mad King George IV, but the name is now used as a term of affection and to describe the local dialect.

The city is hosting matches involving France, Bulgaria and Romania at St. James' Park, home of Newcastle United, the team which finished second in the English championship this year.

The city is laying on 40 events a day to keep fans busy, including a reconstruction of the little-known great fire of Newcastle and a huge noon until midnight beer tent. Europe's biggest travelling funfair also visits the city in June.

Nottingham is an industrial city in the heart of England, with a population of 300,000.

The city is home to Premier League Nottingham Forest, named after nearby Sherwood Forest where Robin Hood and his merry men are said to have lived.

The city ground, Nottingham Forest's home ground, will host matches involving Turkey, Croatia and Portugal.

During the championships the city is also holding the international festival of football for the disabled and a mediaeval pageant.

Sheffield, home of the British steel industry, is a city of 600,000 surrounded by the peak district national park.

The city is home to first division Sheffield United and Premier League Sheffield Wednesday.

Hillsborough, the home of Sheffield Wednesday, will host matches involving Denmark, Portugal, Turkey and Croatia.

Sheffield has pioneered the return of the tram to Britain's streets. The city is holding a range of street entertainment for visiting fans, including a carnival-style European welcome and a jazz festival.



Michael Johnson (Centre) of the USA crosses the finish line to win the mens 200m event at the International Athletics meeting in St. Denis, near Paris June 3. Johnson won in a time of 20 seconds 23. Ramon Clay (Right) of USA and Ivan Garcia of Cuba accompany Johnson (Reuters photo)

Fredericks shows class with fast 100

SAINT-DENIS (R) — Namibian Frankie Fredericks underlined his brilliant form by winning a 100 metres in a sparkling 9.95 seconds at an international athletics meeting Monday.

Fredericks, an Olympic silver medalist at both 100 and 200 metres, equalled his best time for the shorter distance set in 1991 with one of the best performances this season.

The veteran sprinter led throughout in bright sunshine in the Paris suburb of St. Denis. Nigerian Olapade Adeniken was second in 10.17 followed by American Terry Bowen in 10.19.

"I'm in great shape and the conditions were ideal," said a delighted Fredericks. "It's true that I prefer the 200 metres but it's good to be doing well in the 100 metres."

Fredericks said recent training sessions with Britain's Linford Christie had helped him improve.

"We trained together in Australia and Florida and I learned a lot from it," he said. "I haven't decided which distance I will choose for the Olympics. I will make a decision later."

Only three men have run faster than Fredericks over 100 metres this season.

Trinidad's Ato Boldon clocked 9.93 in April, a time equalled by American Dennis Mitchell last month in Atlanta. Carl Lewis came second behind Mitchell in 9.94.

S. Korea pushes for involving North Korea in co-hosting 2002 World Cup

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea's top soccer official Chung Mong-Joon Tuesday said he would continue to push for a North Korean share of the 2002 World Cup despite objections from FIFA Secretary General Sepp Blatter.

"We have to develop the co-hosting of the World Cup (by Japan and South Korea) into a three-way co-hosting that would involve North Korea on the same footing," Chung said in a news magazine interview.

He told the independent Hankyoreh daily's monthly magazine that the World Cup could be turned into a rare opportunity to draw isolated North Korea into international dialogue and international exchanges.

Improvement of inter-Korean ties remains

South Korea's top priority, Chung said.

He recalled that South Korea had promised to share some events with North Korea if the South won the rights to host the cup over rival bidder Japan.

Chung stressed, however, that agreement by Japan would be essential for the three-party co-hosting idea to get off the ground.

Blatter told reporters in Zurich over the weekend that if South Korea insisted that North Korea take part in hosting the cup, FIFA would have to go back to the drawing board and reconsider the 2002 hosting decision afresh.

North Korea in January sent a cable to FIFA saying it would be interested in co-hosting, but has been silent about the issue since then.

China table tennis team to use new tricks

BEIJING (R) — China's women's table tennis team will unveil some new tricks in the Atlanta Olympics to overwhelm the opposition, the Beijing Daily Tuesday quoted a main coach, Lu Yuansheng as saying.

Lu didn't reveal any details of the new tactics, and said the name list for China's Olympic table tennis squad had still not been decided.

"The line-up for Olympics has not been decided yet, but when the time comes, we will present our best players and show off some new moves," he said.

Lu is training more than 30 players, including China's top woman player Deng Yaping, in Zhengding City in China's northern Hebei province, the newspaper said. Only four of the 30 will be chosen for Atlanta.

Chinese rally to tackle Silk Road

BEIJING (AFP) — The first auto rally of all-Chinese cars will tackle Taklamakan Desert, Xinhuas news agency announced Tuesday.

Thirty Chinese manufacturers have said they want to compete in the 4,200 kilometer race in September stopping off at several towns on the famous Silk Road.

The Taklamakan, in the heart of Xinjiang autonomous region, is the second largest desert in the world, covering 330,000 square kilometres (132,000 square miles). The Taklamakan is known for its oil, as well as the top nuclear test site.

Competitors in the first Paris-Beijing Rally in 1992 took a similar route.

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| The bidding: EAST SOUTH WEST NORTH 1 4a Pass Pass Pass | | | |

Opening lead: Nine of ♠
There are two cardinal rules that declarers should apply before playing the first trick. First, count your tricks. Then, plan your campaign.

South had a problem when East opened the bidding with one diamond. South's second suit. The jump to four spades was a practical solution.

West led the nine of diamonds and the lure of a quick discard on the ace of clubs proved irresistible. When East followed with a low diamond, declarer won the queen, crossed to the ten of spades and pitched a heart on the ace of clubs. A diamond from dummy was covered by the ten and ace and ruffed

by West. A heart to the king allowed East to return a trump, and declarer still had to surrender three diamond tricks for a two-trick set.

Let's suppose that South had taken stock before hurrying to dispose of a loser. With the diamond lead, declarer has six trump tricks, two diamonds and the ace of clubs for a total of nine. As long as none of those got away, one diamond ruff on the board would be sufficient to land the game.

There was an obvious risk that West held a singleton diamond, but South had available an elegant counter. After winning the queen of diamonds at trick one declarer should immediately lead a low diamond from hand! Suppose East wins, cashes the ace and king of hearts and then returns a trump (best). Declarer wins in hand, ruffs a diamond with the ten of trumps, cashes the ace of clubs for a diamond discard and returns to hand with a club ruff. After drawing the remaining trumps, declarer's 10 tricks are intact.

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| | | | Arabic | | *The Bridges of Madison County | Starring comedians: | | | |
| | | | Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 | | Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 | Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat | | | |
| | | | | | CONCORD "2" | Arabs Human Rights | | | |
| | | | | | *Pelican Brief | Starts Monday, May 13 | | | |
| | | | | | Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 | at 8:30 p.m. | | | |
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Texas Rangers beat Brewers

MILWAUKEE (R) — Bobby Witt allowed two runs over six innings and Dean Palmer and Mark McLemore drove in two runs apiece as the Texas Rangers built a 9-2 lead and held on for a 9-6 win over the Milwaukee Brewers Monday.

McLemore had RBI doubles in the second and fourth innings and Palmer hit his 15th homer, a two-run shot, in the fifth for a 6-0 Texas lead as Brewers Kluckeballer Steve Sparks (3-6) was rocked for six runs and nine hits in 4 1/3 innings.

Sparks is 0-2 in his last three starts, giving up 16 earned runs and 27 hits in 15 2/3 innings for a 9.19 era.

"Things went pretty well," said Witt. "We scored some runs early, and it makes it a little bit more comforting as a pitcher knowing that you have that kind of run support early."

The Brewers rallied for four runs in the ninth off Texas relievers Ed Vosberg and Mike Henneman but came up short.

Milwaukee got RBI singles by Jesse Lewis and Pat Listach and a two-run single by pinch-hitter Mark Loretta before Henneman retired Jose Valentin to notch his 16th save.

At Minnesota, Chuck Knoblauch had a two-run double and Paul Molitor added a pair of run-scoring singles as the Twins beat

the California Angels 9-3.

Knoblauch, who went 3-for-5 with three RBI, doubled home Ron Coomer and Pat Meares in the second.

Rich Robertson (2-7) allowed three runs and five hits in six innings for the Twins, who smacked 15 hits for their seventh win in nine games.

Chuck Finley (7-3) had his four-game winning streak snapped, giving up seven runs and 12 hits in 7 1/3 innings.

Tim Salmon and Damion Easley hit solo homers for the Angels.

In Oakland, John Wasdin allowed one run over 6 1/3 innings and the Athletics worked out of a ninth-inning jam to post a 2-1 victory over the Kansas City Royals.

The A's carried a 2-1 lead into the ninth, but reliever Jim Corsi gave up singles to Keith Lockhart and Joe Vitiello before giving way to Mike Mohler, who allowed a sacrifice fly that put the tying run on third and the potential winning run at second. But Bill Taylor then came in for Oakland and needed just two pitches to notch his fourth save.

Wasdin (2-0) limited the Royals to five hits for the win. The A's did their scoring in the fourth with a pair of runs off Royals' starter Kevin Appier (4-6).

England soccer squad faces angry backlash

LONDON (R) — England's Euro 96 soccer squad faced an angry backlash on Tuesday as politicians and newspapers poured scorn on an inquiry into damage caused to a plane carrying them home from a far east tour.

Manager Terry Venables said the team accepted "collective responsibility" for the damage to two television sets and a table on the Cathay Pacific flight last week. He said unspecified fines would be imposed on all the players.

Newspapers condemned his findings as a whitewash as it became clear no-one had admitted responsibility for the damage.

"Spineless" said the Daily Mail Newspaper. "England ratbags" said the Daily Mirror, calling the Venables announcement "farceful."

"It is a damning indictment of the state of our game, and it makes England the laughing stock of the world only four days before the start of the European Championship," said the Mirror.

Newspapers carried pictures of some of the England players wearing bags over their heads as they left the squad's Euro 96 training ground.

Cathay Pacific airline had complained the English Football Association and police that members of the England team caused 5,000 pounds of damage on the plane.

Media outrage at the incident was further fuelled by photographs showing players with their shirts ripped and clenching beer bottles at a birthday party for Paul Gascoigne in a Hong Kong nightclub.

Politicians said the outcome of the inquiry was a cover-up and set a bad example to soccer fans and children.

"This is a splendid cover-up. They should tell us exactly who was responsible and exactly how much they have been fined," said Conservative MP David Wilshire.

"I still believe the people responsible for that activity should be kept out of the England team, irrespective of how much damage that would do to our chances. What an example they have set," he added.

Liberal Democrat Menzies Campbell said the outcome had devalued the whole side.

Bulls meet Sonics tonight

CHICAGO (R) — The Bulls have been waiting.

Michael Jordan and company have been waiting nine days for the Seattle SuperSonics to meet them in the NBA finals.

Jordan has been waiting a year to confirm the full return of his unearthly powers.

And the city of Chicago has been waiting three years to rule the basketball world again.

"Winning the championship is not our goal, it's our destiny," said resident alien Dennis Rodman, whose body-shifting abilities include his hair colours and his flights to the ball.

On Wednesday, the Bulls stop waiting and begin the National Basketball Association finals with a chance at the league's most successful season ever.

A Bulls team born in five countries on four continents and several planets could cap a record 72-win regular season with a sweep of the best-of-seven finals for a 15-1 playoff tally.

No team has ever done that, although the 1983 Philadelphia 76ers lost only one playoff game (12-1), in one less round.

Jordan capped the Bulls' cruise to the finals with 45 points as Chicago completed a sweep of the Magic — a partial atonement for his costly turnovers in last year's playoff loss to Orlando after he returned late in the season from an unrequited flirtation with baseball.

"Last year I wasn't in a rhythm to do that for this team," said Jordan, who this season won his fourth Most Valuable Player award and record eighth scoring title.

"We really didn't have a good understanding for each other. This year I had a better understanding about the team and I think they had a better understanding about myself."

Adding Rodman's rebounding Magic this season to the Jordan-Scottie Pippen one-two punch that won three straight titles from 1991-93 completed the Bulls' package.

"After getting Dennis, and getting Michael back in his rhythm, we realised we had a really strong ball team," said Pippen. "From that point it was just a matter of us falling into our rhythm and really getting a feel for this ball club here."

Coach Phil Jackson admits the Bulls expected to be in the finals. "We just felt we had the players, the experience and the know-how," said Jackson, who has the best playoff winning percentage ever (.726).

But in the SuperSonics, the Bulls face the team which best matches them for defensive quickness and scoring options. Seattle's 64-18 regular season was second only to Chicago. The teams split their two games, each winning at home.

The Sonics looked dazzling in sweeping the two-



Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls goes up for a slam dunk during a regular season game against the Pistons earlier this year (File photo)

time defending champion Houston Rockets in the Western Conference semifinals and going up 3-1 on the Utah Jazz. But then it took Seattle three more tries to close Utah out.

Jackson had his team simulate game conditions during nine days of waiting for a Western winner, but expects some rust in Game 1. By Game 2, he feels, the old Bulls could have fresher legs than the young Sonics.

And what about the young Sonics' heads?

Point guard Gary Payton, the NBA's defensive player of the year, and explosive forward Shawn Kemp feel they have erased the "immature" label earned in first-round playoff upsets the past two years. German forward Detlef Schrempf, a former two-time sixth man of the year, says the Sonics were once "spoiled children" but "now we are grown-ups."

However, the only Sonic with finals experience is veteran Sam Perkins. His experience consists of having lost to the Bulls in 1991 with the Los Angeles Lakers.

"Experience is the biggest teacher," Jordan emphasises. "We all had to go through that. Some go through it longer than others."

Along with three rings

apiece for Jordan and Pippen, the Bulls boast two each for Rodman and backup big men John Salley and James Edwards, all earned with the Detroit Pistons.

The rest of the Bulls arrived after Jordan left to play baseball.

Croatian Toni Kukoc, the 1996 sixth man of the year, was finally walking in the door just as Jordan was walking out.

Australian Luc Longley and Canadian Bill Wennington, who head a four-man centre crew with 24 fouls to give, and guards Ron Harper and Beirut-born three-point specialist Steve Kerr know exactly whom to thank for their first trip to the finals.

But if gratitude to Jordan is the order of the day in Chicago, "They're a great team but we can play defence with them," said Karl. "We're just going to have to figure some things out how to play number 23."

"If we can contain him to 25-27 points, we're going to

be doing a great job," said Payton. "If we can neutralise Pippen and make them depend on Jordan, I think we can win."

Orlando coach Brian Hill begs to differ.

"Quite honestly, I don't think Michael is going to be denied," Hill said.



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Defensive replacement hits game-winning homer for Cubs

CHICAGO (R) — Jose Hernandez entered the game as a defensive replacement in the seventh inning but won it for the Cubs with his bat in the ninth.

Hernandez led off the ninth by depositing a pitch from Phillies reliever Ken Ryan into Wrigley Field's left-centre field bleachers to lift the Chicago Cubs to a 4-3 victory over Philadelphia Monday.

Hernandez, who came in for third baseman Dave Magadan, had just 14 hits and no homers in his previous 75 at-bats.

"It feels pretty good. I don't have too many at-bats like I had last year," Hernandez said. "With not as much playing time, I was as hungry as you can be."

Bob Patterson (2-2) tossed 1 1/3 perfect innings to notch the victory for Chicago. Cubs starter Steve Trachsel allowed three runs and nine hits over seven innings and helped himself by hitting his first major-league homer in the fifth inning off Phillies starter Curt Schilling.

Ryan (2-2) was tagged with the loss. "I made a bad pitch and he jumped all over it," Ryan said of Hernandez.

In Cincinnati, Matt Williams hit a two-run homer in the first inning and added a two-run double in the ninth to lead the San Francisco Giants to a 6-3 win over the slumping Reds.

William Vanlandingham (4-7) allowed six hits and two unearned runs over 6 1/3 innings for the win. Giants reliever Rod Beck gave up a run in the ninth. It was just his second run surrendered in 23 1/3 innings this season for an 0.77 era.

The Giants jumped on Reds starter Dave Burba (0-7) for three runs in the first as Barry Bonds doubled home Marvin Benard before Williams hit a 2-2 pitch over the right-field wall for his 13th home run of the season and a 3-0 lead.

The Reds have lost six of seven and 13 of their last 17 games.

In Atlanta, Ryan Klesko's RBI triple in the eighth inning lifted the streaking Braves to a 5-4 come-from-behind win over the New York Mets.

Atlanta's John Smoltz, who took an 11-game win streak and a Major League-leading 11 wins into the game, escaped with no decision despite leaving after six innings trailing 4-1.

The Braves rallied for three runs in the seventh off starter Jason Isringhausen and reliever Doug Henry.

"When I'm not having had luck, I don't have any luck at all," lamented Isringhausen, who was charged with four runs despite allowing just three hits. "Tonight was the best stuff I've had all year."

Bob Macdonald (0-2), who surrendered Klesko's

game-winning triple, suffered the loss as the Braves won for the 21st time in their last 26 games.

In Pittsburgh, Jeff King broke a 2-2 fifth-inning tie with a two-run homer and Carlos Garcia had four hits to lead the Pirates to a 7-2 victory over the Colorado Rockies.

Matt Rubeal (1-0) earned the win in his first Major League decision and Mike Farmer (0-1) got the loss in his.

Rubeal allowed a pair of runs and five hits in seven innings to hand Jim Leyland his 800th win as Pittsburgh manager. "The only problem with that is that I have more losses than wins," Leyland said.

In San Diego, rookie Alan Benes threw his first career shutout and Willie McGee sparked a three-run fourth inning with an RBI single as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Padres 3-0 in a matchup of first-place teams.

The Central Division-leading Cardinals, who improved to 27-29 with their fifth consecutive win, took a half game lead over the idle Houston Astros.

Benes (5-3) surrendered just six hits in his second career complete game. Boh Tewksbury (5-2) was the tough-luck loser, allowing two earned runs and five hits in going the distance for San Diego, which lead the West by five games over the Dodgers.

McRae wins Acropolis Rally

PIRI (AFP) — Colin McRae of Britain drove his Subaru Impreza to victory Tuesday in the Acropolis Rally but could not stop Tommi Makinen of Finland increasing his lead in the World Championship.

The Scotsman, the reigning world champion who won earlier in the season in Thailand, completed the 21 special stages in 5hr 33min 12sec and finished 50 seconds in front of Makinen of Finland in a Mitsubishi Lancer.

Carlos Sainz of Spain, in a Ford Escort, was 3:21 behind.

Makinen now has 55 points after four races, while Sainz is second on 47 and McRae third with 42. Makinen said: "Of course I would prefer to win but second place is enough for me here."

"I attacked for the lead on the last day and I thought I could catch Colin, but in the end it was better not to take any risks."

The demanding event had been expected to produce a flurry of retirements because of mechanical failure but all the major contenders finished.



Spain's Carlos Sainz in his Ford Escort on the second day of the Acropolis Rally. Sainz came in third behind Colin McRae of Britain and Finland's Tomi Makinen (Reuters photo)

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Crown Prince calls for scientific methodology to develop Muslim-Christian understanding

By Ghaila Alul

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The Muslim-Christian encounter on "The Educational System in Islam and Christianity" continued for the second day Tuesday with the presentation of two papers by writer and former senator Hussni 'Ayesh and Professor Christos Vassipoulos from Greece on "The Educational System We Need."

Also addressing the meeting was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who called for continuing Muslim-Christian dialogue with a view to developing a scientific methodology which takes into consideration the common values of all segments of society so that to reach a thorough and comprehensive understanding between Muslims and Christians.

In his remarks, which came during the discussion that followed the presentation of the two papers, Prince Hassan, who is the chairman of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research, which is organising the meeting, said the Jordanian Constitution guarantees the freedom of religion and social and religious human rights in line with the constitution's recognition and protection of pluralism.

Noting that each country has the right to define its official religion, Prince Hassan pointed out that the first article of Jordan's Constitution defines Islam as the official religion of the state.

Responding to a proposal by one of the participants in the debate that the Kingdom include Christian religion in schools curricula, Prince Hassan said the issue of teaching religions should be addressed within the framework of social studies and the prevalent values, stressing the necessity of guiding the youth towards focusing on the common values among the three monotheistic religions.

The Crown Prince, who inaugurated the meeting on Monday, said that "we in this area which witnessed the birth of the three monotheistic religions believe" in pluralism, interdependence and the importance of dialogue.

"This is our message and we are capable of communicating it to the world," said Prince Hassan in the meeting, which brought together more than 50 Christian and Muslim participants from different Muslim and Christian countries.

In a paper which he presented to the meeting Tuesday, Mr. 'Ayesh highlighted what he described as basic features that the educational systems should incorporate, stressing education should be obligatory for all and citing verses from the Holy Quran that urge all Muslims to seek knowledge and education.

Basic education, added Mr. 'Ayesh, has become a human right that all people should enjoy.

Mr. 'Ayesh said that the educational system should aim at developing perfect basic skills and promote equality and democracy in education.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan presides over the opening session on Monday of Muslim-Christian consultation on "the Education System in Islam and Christianity" (Petra photo)

education. "The required educational system has to abide by equality or democracy in such manner as to eliminate discrimination between both sexes and remove gender restrictions prevailing on it," he said.

He also stressed the need to ensure flexibility in education, saying that everyone should be able to receive education in schools, colleges or universities and students should be free to change from one educational branch to another as long as they are able to meet the requirements.

The educational system should also encompass demo-

cratic principles to reflect the society's political orientations and develop them for the better, said Mr. 'Ayesh.

Muslim societies, he said, should provide religious education for citizens belonging to other faiths, saying that "this may strongly entitle Muslims to enjoy such rights in non-Muslim countries over and above teaching the students the inter-religious common factors that bring these religions closer together."

As for the educational systems in the West, Prof. Vassipoulos said "the educational system in the Christian countries of the West has undergone a remarkable qualitative and quantitative growth

regarding its external as well as internal structure and organisation."

This growth, he added, is attributed to the economic, political, social and cultural changes as well as to the principles of the supporters of the "New Education" in Europe and the "Progressive Education Movement" in America.

Prof. Vassipoulos called for the internationalisation of educational policy due to the political and economic interdependence in today's world.

He said the reform of the educational system should take note of social, political

(Continued on page 7)

Qatar emir urges joint Arab action

Sheikh Khalifa, in talks with Srour, pays tribute to Jordan

DOHA (Petra) — Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani on Tuesday met with Lower House of Parliament Speaker Saad Hayel Srour, who arrived in Doha Monday evening.

Mr. Srour, on a three-day visit to the emirate at an invitation by Speaker of the Qatari Shura Council Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifi, conveyed to the Qatari Emir His Majesty King Hussein's best wishes.

Sheikh Hamad praised King Hussein's stand and support for Qatar and commended the Kingdom's achievements under the leadership of the King.

Sheikh Hamad and Mr. Srour reviewed the situation in the Arab region, challenges facing the Arab Nation and the role of Arab parliaments in setting Arab differences and enhancing Arab solidarity and inter-Arab cooperation.

Sheikh Hamad underlined the need to hold an Arab summit to discuss the situation in the region and to resolve disputes. He praised King Hussein's efforts aiming at achieving Arab reconciliation and solidarity.

"I appreciate His Majesty's keenness to work for Arab solidarity because I believe that we, as a nation, have to agree on the basis of solidarity and cooperation; we have to discuss our problems frankly and this is possible through convening an Arab summit," he said.

Qatar, he added, welcomes clearly defined Arab countries on the basis of clarity. The emir praised Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and congratulated the Kingdom for regaining its water and land rights as a result of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in February.

Sheikh Hamad called on Arab parliamentarians to intensify their efforts to achieve Arab reconciliation and solidarity. He said Jordan was one of the countries most affected

by problems inflicting the Arab region over the past years and urged the Kingdom to focus on its comprehensive development process through utilising its qualified manpower.

Mr. Srour said his visit to Qatar was part of moves taken by Jordan to continue consultations and talks with other Arab countries to serve the interests of the Arab Nation.

He briefed the Qatari leader on Jordan's stand on various issues in the region, the Middle East peace process and the repercussions of the Gulf crisis, stressing that Jordan had always sought to be clear in its stands and was always seeking to tackle strains in Arab relations and to unify Arab ranks.

"Jordan does not hesitate to extend its hands towards all Arab brethren so that we will be able to work together with frankness and objectivity to overcome all disputes and achieve the highest level of cooperation, integration and coordination at all levels," he said.

He paid tribute to Qatari efforts aiming to ease inter-Arab tensions and paid tribute to Sheikh Hamad's role in this regard.

He also voiced the Kingdom's keenness to enhance ties with Qatar and any other Arab country and its desire to offer any possible assistance to Qatar in its development process.

Earlier Tuesday, Mr. Srour was received by Bahraini Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sheikh Abdullah Beo Khalifah. Discussions during the meeting focus on means to boost bilateral relations in various fields, the latest developments in the region and the peace process.

Also Tuesday, Mr. Khalifi hosted a lunch in honour of Mr. Srour and the parliamentary delegation accompanying him. The lunch was attended by members of the Qatari Shura Council.

IFOR says nothing has changed over criminals

SARAJEVO (AP) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) officials said Tuesday they have not increased efforts to arrest Bosnian Serb leaders indicted for war crimes despite U.S. comments that NATO is expanding patrols.

"We haven't received any new specific guidance," NATO's Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) spokesman Major Simon Haselock said of recent comments that foreign troops would increase patrols throughout the country.

Following talks Sunday in Geneva with signers of the Dayton peace agreement and the start of a NATO ministers meeting Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said NATO troops would increase patrols to give them a better chance of catching Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

On Tuesday, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said IFOR soldiers were expanding their presence to Pale, a town south-east of Sarajevo where Mr. Karadzic maintains his headquarters. Mr. Burns said U.S. General George Joulwan had informed him of the expanded patrols. But Maj. Haselock said he was un-

ware of any increase in the NATO presence in Pale, adding that Italian troops in the NATO-led force already conduct regular patrols there, and that NATO forces have a permanent liaison team of four people based there.

Mr. Burns said NATO troops would arrest Mr. Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military leader and also a war crimes suspect, on sight. But that has long been the stated policy of NATO commanders, who said their troops are under order to detain any war crimes suspect they encounter while on routine duties.

Mr. Karadzic has remained free despite provisions in the Dayton peace agreement calling for the arrest of all war criminals. His influence in Bosnian Serb territory is considered a major stumbling block to plans for national elections in September.

NATO has been no stranger to Pale, staging weekly news briefings there until last week, when a dispute arose over the venue. Bosnian Serb officials wanted to shift the briefing to a new media centre run by Mr. Karadzic's daughter, but NATO refused

(Continued on page 7)

Syria's Muslim leader backs peace with Israel

CAIRO (AFP) — Syria's leading Muslim authority, Mufti Ahmad Kiftaro, has voiced his support for the Arabs making peace with Israel but not a normalisation of ties.

Sheikh Kiftaro, in an interview with the London-based Arab weekly Al Wasat, compared "peace with the (Israeli) enemy" to a 628 A.D. truce which the Prophet Mohammad sealed with non-Muslims in Mecca.

The truce "ensured the security of both sides," although some Muslims were opposed to the Prophet's concessions, he said.

The mufti of Syria's Sunni Muslims said that "no Arab party should strike a unilateral reconciliation," in reference to Israel's peace treaties with Egypt, Jordan and the autonomy accords struck with the Palestinians.

"But now, in the face of these fait accomplis, we are doing our best to defend the interests of the Arab world," he said, while ruling out a normalisation with the Jewish state.

"Because of the weakness of Islamic education and the strength of the Jews, a normalisation of links is fraught with danger," he said.

"It is imperative for the Arab world to stay on its guard against any normalisation."

The mufti said the "Syrian leadership is seeking a reconciliation which will not endanger Arab and Islamic interests."

Mayor sends message

British Prime Minister John Major has stressed to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad the need to advance the Arab-Israeli peace process, a senior British official said Tuesday.

Foreign Office Minister Jeremy Hanley quoted by the official agency SANA said Mr. Major had sent a message to Mr. Assad urging progress based on UN land-for-peace resolutions.

Mr. Hanley, ending a 24-hour visit to Damascus during which he met the Syrian minister of state for foreign affairs, Nasser Kaddur, also said a business conference was to be held in London next week on trade between the two states.

The British official has been in the region since Sunday to gather reactions to the election of right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu as the new Israeli prime minister.

His tour started in Lebanon, and he was to travel on to Jordan, Egypt and Morocco.

British envoy begins talks day after Cyprus shooting

NICOSIA (AP) — In a bid to reopen top-level negotiations on this divided island, a British diplomat met separately Tuesday with the opposing Great Cyprus and Turkish Cypriot leaders.

The discussions were the first in a series of meetings planned this month. They have taken on added significance in the wake of a shooting Monday in which Turkish troops killed a Greek Cypriot soldier who strayed into the buffer zone that has split the island for 22 years.

Britain's newly appointed special representative for Cyprus, David Hannay, held separate talks in the divided capital with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders.

They are President Glafos Clerides, who heads the Greek Cypriot-run, internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus, and Rauf Denkash, leader of a breakaway Turkish Cypriot state in the Turkish-occupied north of the island.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali is to hold talks with Mr. Denkash on Wednesday in Istanbul and

with Mr. Clerides in Geneva on June 11, also in an effort to get the two Cypriot leaders to meet face-to-face.

Mr. Hannay acknowledged that solving the Cyprus conflict "is not easy or straightforward. There are a lot of difficult issues that have to be resolved."

He said earlier that Monday's shooting "underlines the fragility of the status quo. We must avoid the need to have people with loaded guns facing each other across the middle of a capital city."

Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denkash have negotiated for their communities since ethnic violence broke out in 1963, three years after independence from Britain.

The two have met scores of times in fruitless efforts to end the conflict. They last met in October 1994.

Turkey invaded and occupied the northern third of the island in 1974, saying it was protecting the 18 per cent Turkish Cypriot minority following a short-lived coup by Athens-backed Greek Cypriot extremists.

No Palestinian state ever, Netanyahu aide declares

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The right-wing Likud party of Israeli Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu is willing to let Palestinian autonomy flourish but will never agree to a separate Palestinian state, a senior Likud advisor said Tuesday.

Dore Gold told the daily Yediot Aharonot that the incoming government led by Mr. Netanyahu would respect the accords already struck with the Palestinians, but was implacably opposed to Palestinian independence.

"Every party has a right to bring its dreams to the discussion table," Mr. Gold was quoted as saying.

But "the starting point of our policies is our opposition to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria," he added, using the Israeli-given

name for the West Bank.

"The concept according to Netanyahu, is that they will receive a maximum of self-rule (so long as) we have a maximum of security. That is the formula," Mr. Gold said.

Mr. Netanyahu, who narrowly beat incumbent Prime Minister Shimon Peres to win Wednesday's prime ministerial polls, is trying to form a coalition government after his Likud party won 32 seats in the 120-seat Knesset.

The next government "will demand that the Palestinians disarm Hamas as they have committed to do," Mr. Gold added.

"Later on assuming that the Palestinian side carries out its obligations the final status talks should be started" to determine the status of the autonomous territories. The talks were sus-

pended until after the elections.

He stressed the Palestinians would be able to "do business" with the new government, even though they had signed the autonomy accords with the outgoing Labour leadership.

Mr. Gold telephoned the advisor of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat Mahmoud Abbas, after the polls to reassure him of the right's "commitment" to the peace process.

The final status negotiations, which were opened symbolically on May 5, are to tackle the thorniest issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict such as the future of Jerusalem, the Palestinian refugees who left with the creation of Israel

(Continued on page 7)

Netanyahu victory challenged in court

TEL AVIV (AP) — Three groups of lawyers have challenged Benjamin Netanyahu's election as prime minister on technical grounds, an official said Tuesday.

The lawyers argue that Mr. Netanyahu did not receive more than 50 per cent of the valid votes cast, as required by law, and demand that the vote be repeated.

Thousands of voters cast blank ballot slips on May 29, a sign that they disapproved of both Mr. Netanyahu and Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Mr. Netanyahu defeated Mr. Peres by a narrow margin of just over 29,000 votes out of nearly three million cast.

Spoiled ballots numbered over 148,000. The central election commission said there was no record of how many of these were blank

slips and how many were disqualified for other reasons.

The petitioners said that last year, when the commission adopted a regulation saying blank slips are invalid, the protocol did not say whether it was approved by a two-thirds majority, as required by law.

Therefore the petitioners claim the interpretation is illegal and the blank slips should be included in the total number of valid votes. If that is the case, Mr. Netanyahu received less than the required 50 per cent.

The state's response, submitted in writing Tuesday, says the regulation was adopted by a two-thirds majority in 1973 — under the previous electoral system — and merely amended in 1995.

Even before its adoption,

the basic law: the government "clearly implies in several of its articles that a blank ballot slip is invalid," said Ayelet Wittenberg, legal adviser to the commission.

Furthermore, the state argued that if the petitioners genuinely object to the regulation, they ought to have petitioned the court before the election result was known.

Five supreme court judges will hear the petitions Wednesday, the same day the central election commission plans to announce the final official results, said Moshe Goral, spokesman of the courts administration.

It was not clear whether the petitioners were affiliated with any political group.

A senior official in Mr.

(Continued on page 7)

Syria turns to Arab friends to confront hardline Likud

CAIRO (R) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad will increasingly turn to Arab friends for support in the face of Israel's hardline Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu, who he believes is less eager for peace than his predecessor, diplomats and analysts said.

Although he knows that Mr. Netanyahu will give him less leeway than the outgoing Shimon Peres of Labour, who lost his post by a razor-thin margin, Mr. Assad will not change his conditions for peace with Israel and may even play Syria as the flexible card against the intransigent Likud, they said.

"The worst thing for Syria is to allow Israel to develop the perception that the Arab World is fragmented because this will help Likud to harden its position," a Cairo-based

Arab analyst told Reuters.

He said that meetings between various Arab leaders this week were part of Syria's efforts to shore up a unified front after Mr. Netanyahu's victory speech on Sunday, which disappointed many in the Arab World by not mentioning peace with Damascus or readiness to withdraw from occupied Arab territory.

Mr. Assad has already met his Lebanese and Egyptian counterparts to discuss the impact of Mr. Netanyahu's victory and made it clear that Arab unity was the way ahead.

"Syria supports any meeting of the Arabs if it is a meeting of the frontline countries. We think that this is the only way that we can reach salvation. If we don't do this and we don't reach

this consensus or semi-consensus then the path will be fraught with difficulties," Mr. Assad said after meeting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo on Monday.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa flew to Saudi Arabia on Monday for talks with the foreign ministers of Egypt and Saudi Arabia on the possibility of holding a summit of several Arab leaders.

Syria and Israel have achieved little after five years of peace talks. While Damascus insists on a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights, which Israel seized in 1967, the Jewish state has demanded assurances of full diplomatic ties and both sides disagree over borders and security arrangements.

The two sides have not sat

down around a negotiating table since Mr. Peres broke off talks in March and recalled his team from Washington after a wave of suicide bombings by militants.

Mr. Assad said in Cairo on Monday that a resumption of the talks was "not on the agenda" because Syria was waiting for the new Israeli government to outline its policy.

Once talks are back on track, Mr. Assad's team will find a tougher approach from their Israeli counterparts, a Cairo-based diplomat who follows the Middle East peace process said.

"What Syria wants has not changed — it wants the Golan Heights back, period. What may have changed is Syria's perception of Israel's eagerness to make a deal," he said.

"The Syrians thought Peres was eager to make a deal with them. They now have someone who does not have the same negotiating stance."

"But the Syrians play their cards very well. We're not sure Assad has a card up his sleeve, but he acts as if he does. Peres treated him as if he did but Netanyahu treats him as if he doesn't," the diplomat said.

One analyst said when Syria urged the United States on Saturday to call for the resumption of the peace talks, it could have been trying to present itself as the flexible party.

"The pressure on Syria from the United States won't be the same as it was with a Labour government in Israel. The ball, if not in the court of Likud, is just over the new now," he said.

COLUMN 8

Ford declines to tee off on Clinton

WASHINGTON (R) — Asked to evaluate President Bill Clinton's golf game, Gerald Ford produced a hook rather than a slice. "He's a good part-time golfer," the former U.S. president told a National Press Club audience. "And sometime down the road, he'll have more time to work on it." Mr. Ford himself has golfed avidly, often with Bob Hope, since leaving the White House in 1977. He and the current incumbent have played together three times, he said. Mr. Ford spoke at a ceremony to award two Gerald R. Ford Foundation Prizes for Distinguished Reporting. He was accompanied by his wife, Betty, who was in Washington to promote the Betty Ford Centre for treating alcoholism and drug dependency.

Buddha's teeth may mark Hong Kong handover

HONG KONG (R) — The Buddha's teeth, a holy relic kept in Beijing, may be brought in to mark Hong Kong's 1997 return to China, local newspapers said Tuesday. Local Buddhist groups believed the British colony's July 1, 1997 handover to China could not be more sacred than with the blessing of the religious relic, they said. The head of the Hong Kong Buddhist Association, Reverend Sik Kwok-Kwong, who sits on a Chinese Preparatory Committee laying ground for the sovereignty transfer, said the teeth might be exhibited for 10 days after the handover. The committee is toying with a variety of ideas for grand events to mark the historic day, ranging from parachute jumps to an extravaganza by magician and illusionist David Copperfield.

Over 300 million Chinese wear spectacles

BEIJING (R) — More than 300 million Chinese wear spectacles and Beijing has set aside June 6 as National Eye-Care Day, the Beijing Youth Daily said Tuesday. More than five million Chinese are blind, while another 16 million, including 10 million children, have poor sight or eye diseases, of which 75 per cent are curable, it said. The newspaper quoted a survey that showed 78.8 per cent of urban students aged between 19-22 were near-sighted. The rate in rural areas was nearly 75 per cent. Moreover, 70 per cent of spectacles on the market in China were sub-standard, it said.

Nick Cage leaves Las Vegas for Alcatraz

NEW YORK (R) — Now that he has won an Oscar, Nicholas Cage can get on with his real dream — becoming a neurotic 1990s version of Arnold Schwarzenegger. The guy wins a best actor Oscar for playing a pumped-up self-destructive drunk in Leaving Las Vegas and now he wants to be the last action hero. That's why he is starring as FBI chemical weapons expert Stanley Goodspeed in The Rock and why he has chosen an action adventure for his next vehicle. The Rock, which co-stars Sean Connery, has Cage as a reluctant recruit to rescue Alcatraz, the abandoned island prison in San Francisco Bay, from terrorists.